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CANADIANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT: ATTITUDES AND CHOICES

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The environment has emerged over the past few years as one of the top two or three issues on the minds of Canadians. At the current time, concerns over the economy and worries about government itself seem to be very top-of-mind with Canadians. But we know from all of our research that most individuals consider environmental improvement and protection to be one of their top public policy priorities; they believe it should be a top priority of government as well.

One unusual indicator of this interest in the environment as an issue came from our telephone interviewers on this project. They reported a very high level of interest among respondents in responding to our questions. The incidence of people terminating the survey in mid-course was the lowest in our memory.

There is not a strong consensus on exactly what is the most important environmental issue. Water and air pollution top the list, but other issues such as waste disposal and ozone depletion rank highly as well. Given that the concern over the environment is strongly driven by a belief that the environment can affect human health, it is not surprising that many different environmental issues are important to Canadians. The public wants the broad spectrum of environmental issues addressed, not simply three or four separate problems.

The public sees itself as doing its fair share to ensure a healthy environment. It does not see business and government as equally committed. In fact, Canadians are quite optimistic about society's ability to learn to live in an environmentally friendly manner. They have this sense of optimism because they believe that individual Canadians have engaged this issue and will for the most part do what is necessary in the medium to longer term to ensure a healthy environment. They do not give much credit to business or government for their actions to date, but they remain open minded about the potential contributions of these parties in the future.

In fact while Canadians do not want to cede ownership of this issue to government, they will certainly accept government direction. There is a definite sense that there has been enough talk about the environment but that it is now time to get moving. Supporting this view, even in recessionary times, is the belief that environmental improvement and protection activities are perfectly compatible with economic development. Canadians will not be convinced that on a regular basis, environmental and economic trade-offs have to be made.

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Even if they were convinced that such trade-offs were required, Canadians express the view that environmental considerations should normally take precedence over economic considerations.

The discussion of which policy instruments Canadians are prepared to accept is a complex one. The public is eager for more education and information that will enable individual Canadians to act in a more environmentally friendly way. They are somewhat supportive of measures which impose costs on them, such as having to pay extra for garbage pick-up or to water the lawn. Yet our focus group work suggests that the public's depth of commitment to the environment may not yet be deep enough for them to accept additional taxes or levies, especially given their feeling that they are already doing their share while government and business are not.

In terms of how government can influence business, Canadians are willing to accept new laws which guide corporate behaviour, increased polluters taxes and efforts to educate business as to what constitutes environmentally friendly corporate behaviour. Six out of ten Canadians would support the immediate expenditure of tax dollars to promote the development of new environmental technologies. There is a strong sense among Canadians that technology will help us dramatically in the next few years in finding ways to both clean up the environment and prevent further deterioration.

Canadians are now looking for government action in the environmental area. The public is worried about the environment, but at the same time people are very optimistic that solutions will be found. They are looking for collaborative efforts that involve

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I. INTRODUCTION

Decima Research is pleased to submit to Environment Canada a report on public attitudes toward environmental issues. Fieldwork for this study was conducted during the period of August 16, 1990 to August 24, 1990. Focus groups were held in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal during the period August 30 to October 4.

This study was coordinated by Gary Breen, Vice-President of Decima Research. He was assisted by Bruce Anderson, Ashraf Hossain and Jennifer Pritchard.

This report will first look at general attitudes related to the issue of the environment. We will attempt to define what, in the public's mind, the environmental issue/problem is. We will then move on to potential policy initiatives for government and finally to the sense of optimism that Canadians display toward the environment.

Background

This study looks at the environment as a self-contained issue. It is important before we start, however, to review other data available from the Decima Quarterly which places the issue of environment in a broader perspective.

Where Does the Environment Fit as an Issue?

To answer this question with any accuracy, we must look back over the last ten years to understand a complex public opinion environment. In the recession of the early 1980's, economic concerns dominated the thoughts of Canadians. Other policy areas, such as international affairs, energy, social/moral issues and national unity each claimed only a very small percentage of people who declared one or the other to be "Canada's most important problem".

Public concern about economic issues and particularly unemployment has generally declined over the past four years. Over the same time period, a growing number of Canadians began to identify social and moral issues as the most serious problem facing the nation. The growing importance placed by Canadians on these "quality of life" issues became clear in the last quarter of 1987 and the first quarter of 1988. Concern about these issues remained relatively stable over the remainder of 1988 and 1989, with the number of Canadians identifying social and moral issues as the nation's most important problem at a level well above that measured over the previous nine years.

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In June 1989, the environment became – in the view of the Canadian public – the most serious problem facing the country. It remained the top issue throughout 1989. Cited by 17 percent, the environment achieved its highest level of top-of-mind concern ever in September of that year.

In this current year, 1990, the environment has declined somewhat in terms of "Canada's most important problem." But this is not due to any reduction in concern about the environment. It is due to the rise of two other major issues which remain with us today; in the early and middle parts of the year, the emerging issue was national unity and in the latter part of the year it has been a combination of the recession, taxes (eg. the GST) and government itself. This last comment relates to the growing belief among Canadians that governments at both the federal and provincial levels are not responding to the wishes and needs of Canadians. Having said this, both the focus groups held over the course of this project and other work we have done confirms that the environment remains a critically important subject to Canadians.

Table 1

Regional Perceptions of Canada's Most Important Non-Economic Problems
September 1990

% Response

	The Environment	Social/Moral Issues	International Affairs	National Unity	Government
British Columbia	11	10	4	9	14
Alberta	8	8	4	6	17
Saskatchewan	6	4	1	4	17
Manitoba	7	10	1	9	8
Metro Toronto	10	17	2	10	12
Balance Ontario	8	8	3	9	14
Quebec	8	8	1	14	11
New Brunswick	7	7	4	13	15
Nova Scotia	6	7	8	9	11
Prince Edward Island	7	8	7	5	20
Newfoundland	0	8	5	5	7

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Concern for the Environment and Health Effects

Virtually all Canadians continue to indicate that they are at least "somewhat concerned" about the quality of the environment. The intensity of this concern dropped in June 1990, but has since increased to stand at a level similar to the past few years (Table 2).

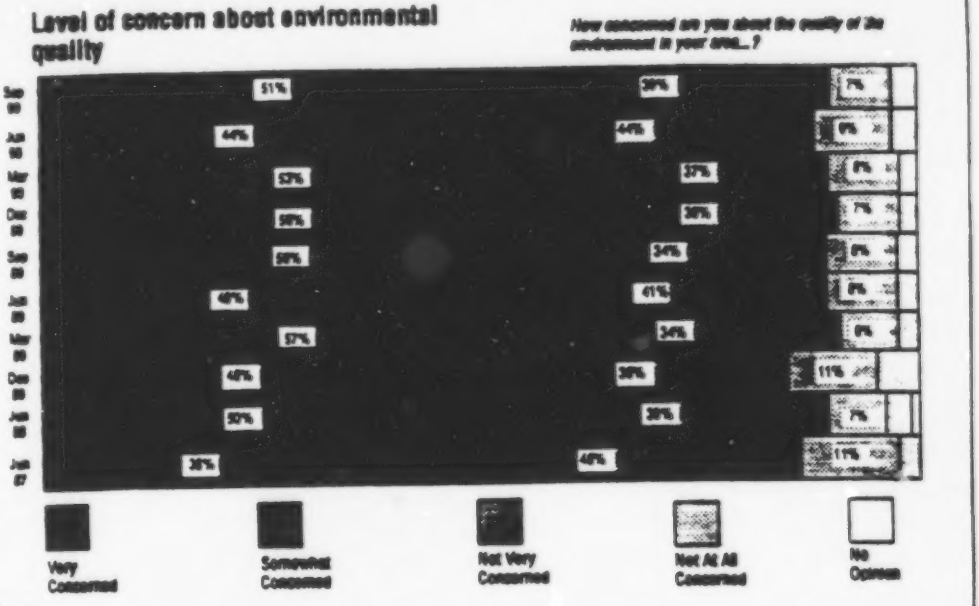

Table 2

Although levels of concern about environmental quality are relatively consistent across population groups, women are somewhat more likely to express concern (55% of women are very concerned compared to 51% of men).

Canadians also continue to believe strongly in the adverse impact of the environment on health. Four-in-five Canadians believe the environment affects their health at least a "fair amount." The intensity of this response is fairly consistent with the data recorded over the past few years (Table 3).

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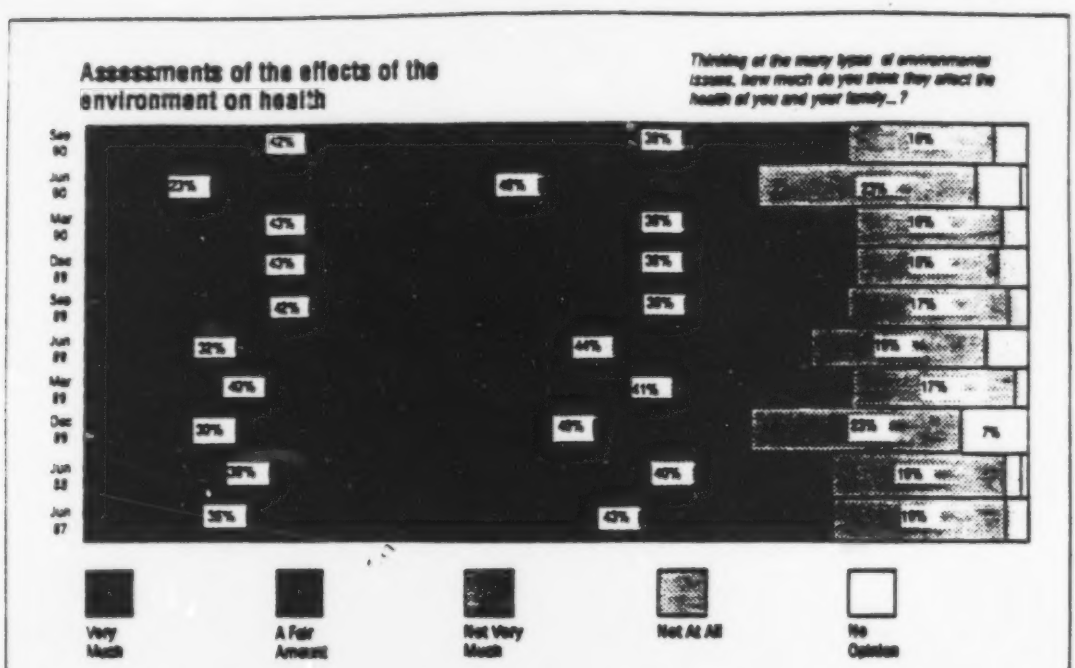

Table 3

There continues to be a high degree of association between the depth of concern for the environment and perceptions of the impact on health. As one would then expect, the demographic variations on these two questions are quite similar. Those most likely to express high levels of concern for the environment and to believe the environment affects their health "very much" include residents of Ontario, young adults, women, and those employed for pay (particularly working women). In contrast, those least likely to be concerned about the environment and its affect on health are residents of Saskatchewan and Quebec, older Canadians (60 years and over), men and those not employed for pay (especially non-working men).

Behaviourial Change

Canadians continue to report they are making lifestyle changes in response to their concerns for the environment. One-third of respondents now claim to have made "major changes" in the way they live as a direct result of their environmental concerns. More than eight-in-ten Canadians (82%) say they have made at least minor changes in their lifestyles (Table 4).

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Table 4

Have Environmental Concerns Caused Changes in the Way You Live?

	% Response				
	June 1987	**June 1988**	**June 1989**	**June 1990**	**Sept. 1990**
Major Changes	16	20	22	29	32
Minor Changes	42	46	49	53	50
No Real Changes	42	34	29	18	18

* Over the past several years, would you say that you have made... in the way you live because of concerns about the environment?

We must point out that we can only report reported behaviour, not observed behaviour. Having said this, a jump of 24 points (from 58% to 82%) in the number of people who say they have made at least minor changes in their lifestyle due to environmental considerations is strong testimony to the degree to which Canadians consider the environment an important issue and one in which they are willing to be involved.

Focus Groups

Focus groups are held with precisely the same types of people who respond to our telephone surveys, that is, average Canadians. We recruit people either randomly using the telephone or we reinvite people who have attended previous groups (but only one or two) on different subjects.

Focus groups are conducted so that we can "flush out" the opinions we collect through telephone surveys. We must find out why people think things; something that is not always apparent from quantitative surveys. We also use focus groups to test communications materials; a task that is nearly impossible using the telephone. Both of these objectives were behind the use of focus groups in this project for Environment Canada.

Focus group discussions are led by a moderator whose role is to pace the discussion and probe on issues of importance. The moderator attempts to establish a non-threatening atmosphere and achieve balanced participation by group members whenever possible. An agenda is followed as a guideline to ensure adequate coverage of topics. While the focal point of the groups is the discussion of ideas and issues, moderators at Decima have found the use of scaled questions to be particularly effective within this setting.

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II. GENERAL ATTITUDES

The previous section of this report was based on data gathered for the Decima Quarterly. We now move to findings from the survey conducted specifically for Environment Canada. When asked on an unaided basis, Canadians do not cluster around one issue as the most important environmental issue facing the country today. Rather several issues emerge, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5

THE ISSUES

	%
Water Pollution	17
Air Pollution	14
Garbage/Waste	12
Ozone Depletion	9
Acid Rain	8
Forestry/Wildlife	6
Other	26*
Don't Know	7

* *For a more complete list, see question #1 in the interview schedule (in the technical appendix).*

These results are consistent with what we discovered in the focus groups undertaken as a part of this project. Basically all environmental issues are important to the public. If there is a bias, however, it is that the issues of water and air pollution are slightly more important than other issues. One notable demographic difference is the much higher level of concern among women for issues such as garbage and waste disposal. Conversely, men are twice as likely as women to be concerned about the issue of acid rain.

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On a regional basis, water pollution is most important in Ontario and Quebec, as is acid rain. Residents of British Columbia, the Prairies and the Atlantic region are somewhat more likely to be concerned with resource conservation aspects of environmental concern, such as the preservation of resources, fish and wildlife habitat.

Table 6

THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM BY REGION

Region	Water Pollution %	Air Pollution %	Garbage/ Recycling %	Ozone Depletion %	Acid Rain %	Other %
British Columbia	13	17	22	11	3	30
Prairies	12	12	24	10	5	28
Ontario	23	17	21	7	10	18
Quebec	25	16	8	5	16	24
Atlantic	17	11	18	9	9	28

Appraisals of the Environment

Canadians appraise the current and future states of the environment as follows:

Table 7

CURRENT STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

	%
Very poor condition	5
Poor condition	21
Fair condition	49
Good condition	21
Very good condition	3

Table 8

OUTLOOK ON THE ENVIRONMENT

	%
Getting worse	64
Staying the same	20
Getting better	16

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Table 9 combines the results of Table 7 and 8 by looking at the environment by perceptions of the current state of the environment. Two points should be made:

1) regardless of current perceptions of the environment, a clear majority in each group believe the environment is deteriorating.

2) this sense of deterioration is significantly stronger among those who think the environment is already in poor condition.

Table 9

OUTLOOK ON THE ENVIRONMENT BY CURRENT STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

	Getting Worse %	Staying the Same %	Getting Better %
Very Poor/Poor Condition	70	17	12
Fair Condition	63	21	17
Good/Very Good Condition	59	21	20

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Canada's Relative Environmental Performance

Canadians as a whole seem a little uncertain as to whether Canada is ahead or behind other industrialized countries in terms of taking measures to improve protection of the environment. When given four countries as points of comparison, Canadians see the Scandinavian countries as furthest ahead in protecting their environments, with Canada ranking a distant second.

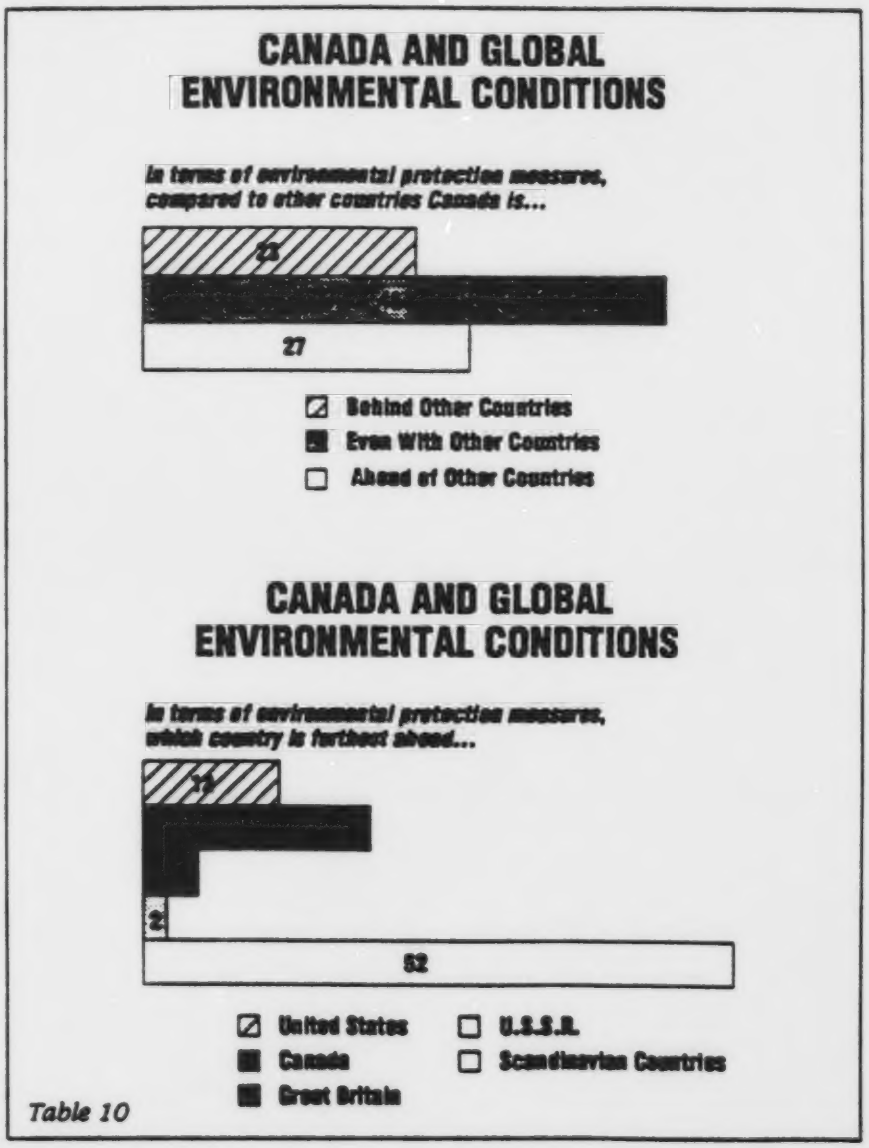

Table 10

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Environmental Contributions

A key to understanding environmental attitudes is to realize that individual Canadians believe for the most part that they and their neighbours are doing their fair share to ensure a healthy environment. If, as we highlighted earlier, Canadians see their environment deteriorating, then it must be that institutions are not holding up their end of the bargain. As Table 11 suggests, the public sees their provincial government, the federal government and industry and business as the groups which are not doing their fair share.

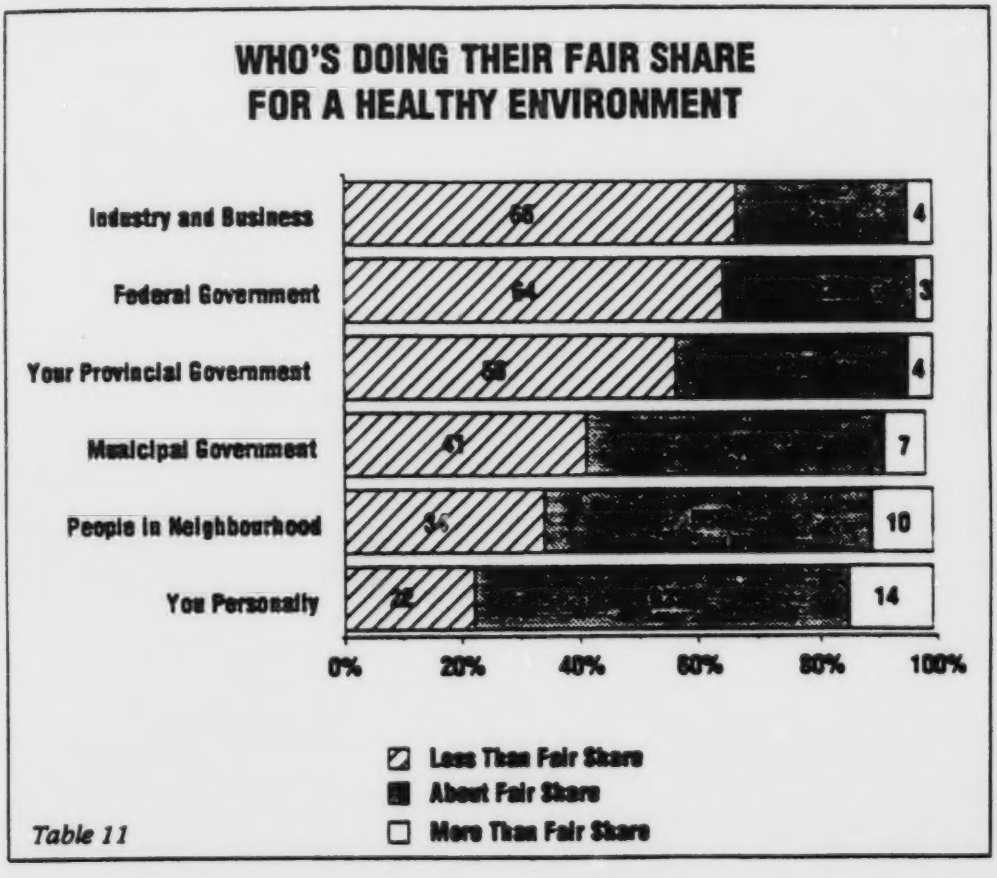

Table 11

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Ranking of issues

We asked respondents to rank issues according to their importance as environmental issues. We did this by grouping issues, in order to give us a better idea of which atmospheric issue, for example, the public deems to be most important. The following table presents the results. By way of explanation, if everyone had chosen global warming as the most important issue among the four atmospheric issues presented, its ranking score would have been 1.0.

Table 12

RANKING OF ISSUES HAVING TO DO WITH THE ATMOSPHERE

	Rank 1-4
Depletion of the ozone layer	1.91
Acid rain	2.33
The quality of the air where I live	2.78
Global Warming	2.97

RANKING OF ISSUES HAVING TO DO WITH WATER RESOURCES

	Rank 1-3
The quality of local drinking water	1.64
Ocean pollution around our coastline	2.15
The quality of recreational waters, such as lakes and river in your region	2.23

RANKING OF OTHER ISSUES HAVING TO DO WITH NATURAL RESOURCES

	Rank 1-5
Destruction of our forests	1.92
Soil erosion and contamination	2.84
Fish stocks	3.11
The loss of wilderness areas	3.18
Arctic pollution	3.95

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Earlier we noted how the issues of water and air pollution topped our list of unaided problems the public associates with the environment. Table 8 suggests that the public takes a more national or global view of the problem of air quality, but is very concerned with the issue of the quality of local drinking water.

For each of the issues listed above, we asked a follow-up question "would you say you are generally optimistic or pessimistic about society's ability to solve this problem in the future?" Results are presented in Table 13:

Table 13

OPTIMISM REGARDING VARIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Issue	% Who Are Optimistic About the Issue's Resolution
Quality of local drinking water	78
Quality of air where you live	73
Quality of recreational waters	68
Acid rain	62
Ozone depletion	61
Fish stocks	61
Soil erosion and contamination	60
Arctic pollution	59
Forest destruction	58
Global warming	57
Loss of wilderness areas	56
Ocean pollution	53

Our focus group work produced some important findings in this area. The public seems convinced that most of the environmental issues listed in Table 13 will actually get worse over the next three to five or even ten years. But Canadians also seem convinced that over the longer term, these same issues will be dealt with effectively, and will diminish as sources of concern. As Table 14 suggests, they believe this given their assumptions that:

1. all three levels of government have a responsibility to act in this area; and
2. even if governments, industry and consumers can act together, it will still take a never ending collective vigilance to clean up the environment.

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We asked a specific question about the way chemicals and chemical products are produced, used and disposed. Only 51% of Canadians are optimistic about society's ability to better deal with issues such as chemical use and disposal.

On a slightly more optimistic note, 60% of Canadians say they are optimistic about society's ability to deal with our garbage and other wastes in the future.

Table 14

WHO HAS PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING ACTION TO PROTECT AND IMPROVE THE ENVIRONMENT?

	% Agree
The Federal Government	6
The Provincial Government	3
Your Municipal Government	2
All three governments have equal responsibility	89

ASSUMING THAT GOVERNMENTS, INDUSTRY AND CONSUMERS COOPERATE, HOW LONG IT TAKE TO CLEAN UP THE ENVIRONMENT TO A SATISFACTORY LEVEL?

	% Agree
Less than 5 years	3
5-10 years	10
Longer than 10 years	12
It will be an ongoing effort that will never end	76

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III. THE MANDATE OF GOVERNMENT

A series of issue statements was read to respondents for their reaction:

	% Agree
If government got tougher on people in an effort to improve the environment, we might be bothered for a while but eventually we will support the effort	79
Achieving a better environment will mean significant changes in my lifestyle	72
If someone has to pay more to protect the environment, it should be businesses and not individual Canadians	52
I personally do a number of things which are bad for the environment	39

At first glance, there appears to be an inconsistent pattern among these responses. In particular, statements two and four appear somewhat contradictory, i.e. if relatively few people think they do things that are bad for the environment, why would they agree that significant changes will be needed in their lifestyles? But in essence, the message appears to be that Canadians are ready to support an effort to protect the environment, even though they are far from certain that they as individuals caused the problem in the first place. They do accept that some of the solutions that will need to put in place will affect their future lifestyles.

It seems that Canadians are drawing a line between the environmental problems and solutions they have seen to date and the problems, solutions and objectives they have for the future. In response to another set of statements, Canadians appear to be setting realistic targets for environmental action:

	% Response
We can reverse the environment damage done up to now	31
or	
We can't reverse the damage, but we can stop things from getting any worse	69

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Focus group discussions revealed that while Canadians can see that, at the micro-economic level i.e. a particular plant, project or town, economic considerations are not always compatible with environmental concerns, at the macro-level the public is convinced that economic and environmental concerns are compatible. This qualitative finding is strongly reinforced by the following survey response:

	% Response
Environmental clean up will help the economy in the long run	85
or	
Environmental clean up will hurt the economy in the long run	13

A series of issue statements attempted to gauge the degree of background support that exists for action in the environmental area. From the list presented below, it is clear that the public is ready for action.

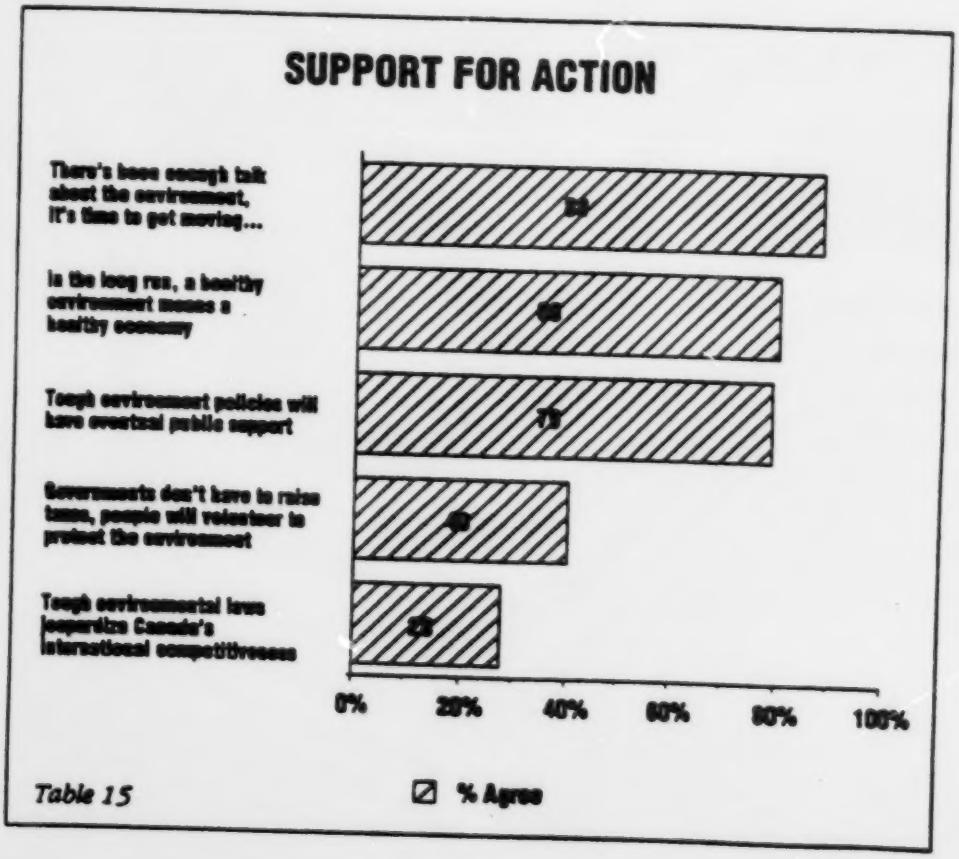
SUPPORT FOR ACTION
There's been enough talk about the environment, it's time to get moving...
In the long run, a healthy environment means a healthy economy
Tough environment policies will have eventual public support
Governments don't have to raise taxes, people will volunteer to protect the environment
Tough environmental laws jeopardize Canada's international competitiveness
0%
20%
40%
60%
80%
100%
% Agree

Table 15

The two statements which received the lowest degrees of agreement are stories within themselves:

> *"Governments don't have to force people to be environmentally responsible by raising taxes and prices, people will do so voluntarily for the good of the environment".*

While the public has a good deal of respect for the job that individual Canadians have done attempting to improve and protect the environment, the public does not believe that everyone will gladly pitch in and do their fair share in the future. Therefore, some form of influence on individual behaviour may be acceptable, including higher prices and/or taxes.

The other statement of interest is:

> *"In order to be competitive with other countries, Canada's environmental laws should not be tougher than those of our competitors, even if that means we will have to reduce our expectations for a cleaner environment."*

Clearly Canadians do not want to be told to reduce their expectations for a cleaner environment. Our focus group work revealed that while Canadians are increasingly concerned with the issue of international competitiveness, they remain convinced that a clean environment can mean a strong economy. The argument, therefore, that giving up some environmental benefits will help us remain competitive is not one that strikes a chord with the public.

Policy Instruments

The question of which policy instruments Canadians would accept from government was studied from several angles. The first was to provide respondents with the choices listed in Table 16:

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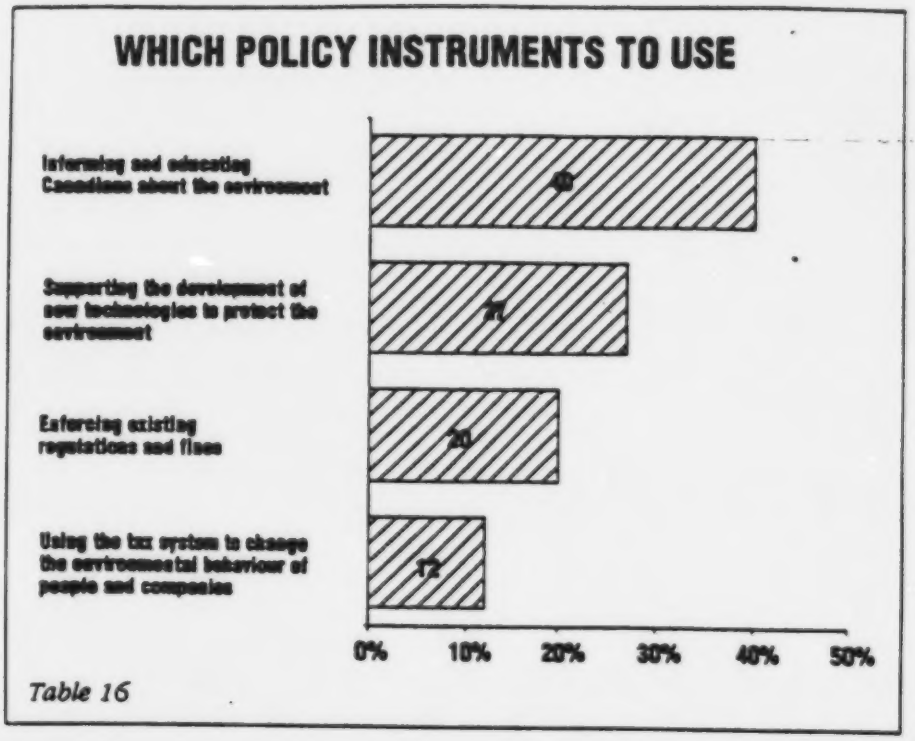

Table 16

The focus group discussions made it clear that respondents want a number of different policy avenues pursued; selecting one policy (as Table 16 asks them to do) made for difficult choices. Canadians want more information on how to personally take measures which assist the environment. They are also very optimistic about the potential for technology to not only clean up the environment, but to prevent further deterioration from taking place. There is less support for enforcing regulations and fines and for using the tax system which we know from other work is strongly distrusted by the public.

Potential Federal Initiatives

A second, more specific list of things the federal government could do in the environmental field was presented to respondents. They were each asked to rate the ideas as something the federal government "should do right away", something the government "should consider" or something the government "should not consider doing". Results are presented in Table 17.

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Table 17

POTENTIAL FEDERAL INITIATIVES

	Should Do Right Away %	Should Consider %	Should Not Consider %
Inform people of what they can do to protect the environment	90	10	1
Investigate and publicize situations where businesses or people are polluting even if this invades their privacy	68	25	6
Help bring business, labour and interest groups together to work on environmental solutions, even if this delays action being taken	66	28	5
Impose a tax on environmentally harmful products even if this raises the price of a product	61	31	7
Spend more tax dollars to develop new environmental technologies	60	31	9
Send polluters to jail for repeated offences	53	32	16
Give people tax breaks for helping solve environmental problems, even if this means that other Canadians might have to pay higher taxes to make up the difference	36	38	25
Give businesses tax breaks for coming up with environmental solutions, even if this means that individual Canadians might have to pay higher taxes to make up the difference	30	36	34

Support for informing people about what they can do to protect the environment does not vary by current appraisals of the Canadian environment. As Table 18 suggests, even those people who believe the environment is in good condition, or that it is in improving condition, strongly believe that Canadians should receive more information on environmental matters right away.

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Table 18

SUPPORT FOR INFORMING CANADIANS BY PERCEPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

	% of each group who say that informing Canadians is something to be done right away
Do you think that Canada's environment is in:	
Poor Condition	91
Fair condition	90
Good Condition	88
Getting Worse	91
Staying the Same	87
Getting Better	90

It is noteworthy that the most popular options listed in Table 18 are low cost/no cost items. In particular, increased consultation with business, labour and interest groups is seen as something that should be pursued immediately. Our focus groups revealed that Canadians do not believe that consultation should have the effect of delaying action. The public believes that all interested parties should be able to get together and hammer out the best possible course of action quickly, not just in the environmental area, but in other public policy areas as well (such as the constitution, the economy etc.).

Acceptance of Specific Initiatives

The reader is directed to the interview schedule contained in the technical appendix of this report. Questions 58 to 65 and 66 to 73 were designed first to ascertain the perceived level of sacrifice that Canadians associate with selected environmentally oriented initiatives and then secondly, to determine the degree of support that would exist if the federal government were to take each of the same measures. The results of these questions are presented in Table 19.

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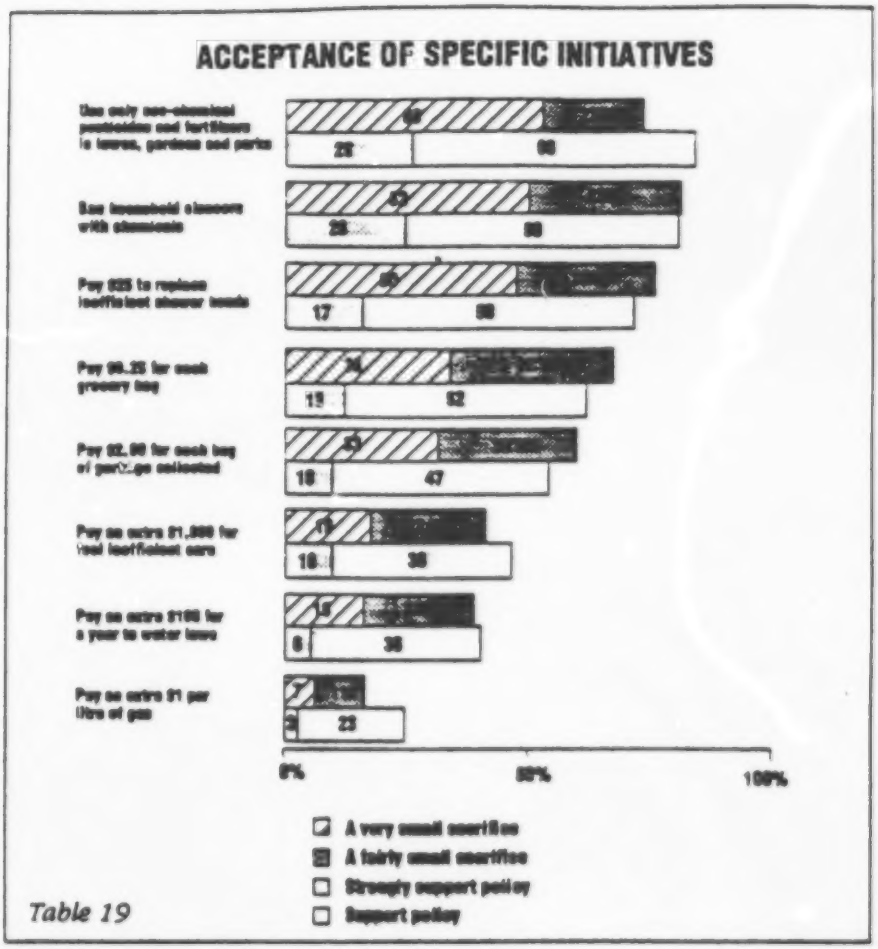

Table 19

Three general conclusions can be drawn:

1. In each case the percentage that classified a measure as a "small sacrifice" was usually very close to the percentage who said they would "support" a measure;
2. There was a strong correlation between the perceived sacrifice involved with a measure and support for the measure, i.e. people who saw little sacrifice associated with a measure were more likely to go on to say that they would support that measure;
3. In each case, however, the percentage of respondents who suggested they would "strongly support" a measure was much lower than the percentage who allowed that such a measure would be a "very small" sacrifice.

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In other words, there is a relationship between the perceived sacrifice involved with a measure and support for that measure. However, point three above suggests that support for particular measures is not predictable based solely on how little pain a particular measure might inflict on individual Canadians. Indeed, our overall survey and focus group results would suggest that many Canadians would not support particular policies even though they involved relatively little personal sacrifice because they believe that certain policies would be ineffective or counterproductive in the longer term.

To expand upon this point, the following eight charts look at each of the measures first by their overall support levels and then by the degree of support related to the perceived size of the sacrifice. As we have already pointed out, there is a correlation between perceived sacrifice and support for the measure. However, it is interesting to note how some Canadians who perceive there to be little sacrifice associated with a particular initiative do not support the implementation of the policy and conversely, how other Canadians who perceive there to be major sacrifices associated with particular initiatives remain supportive of those policies.

SUPPORT FOR PAYING $25 TO REPLACE THE SHOWER HEADS IN YOUR HOME WITH WATER CONSERVING MODELS

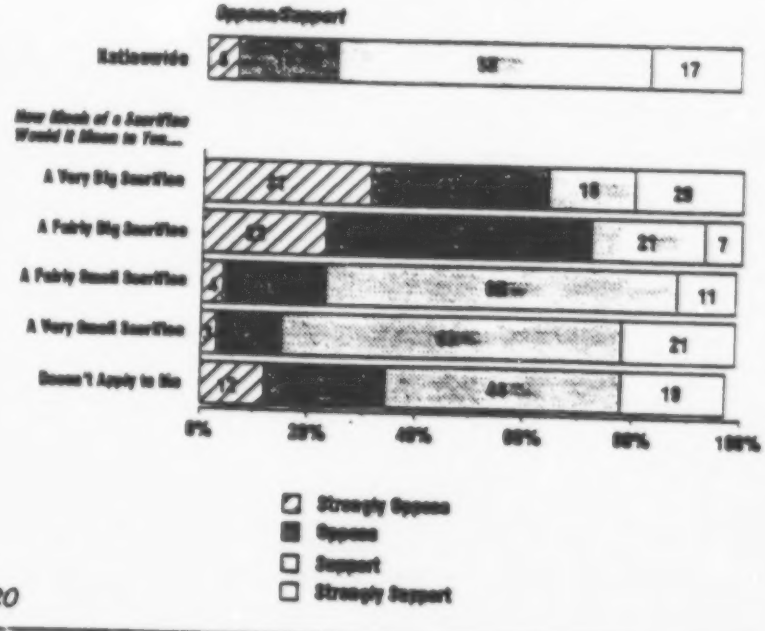

Table 20

DECIMA

SUPPORT FOR HAVING TO PAY AN EXTRA $2 PER BAG TO HAVE YOUR GARBAGE COLLECTED

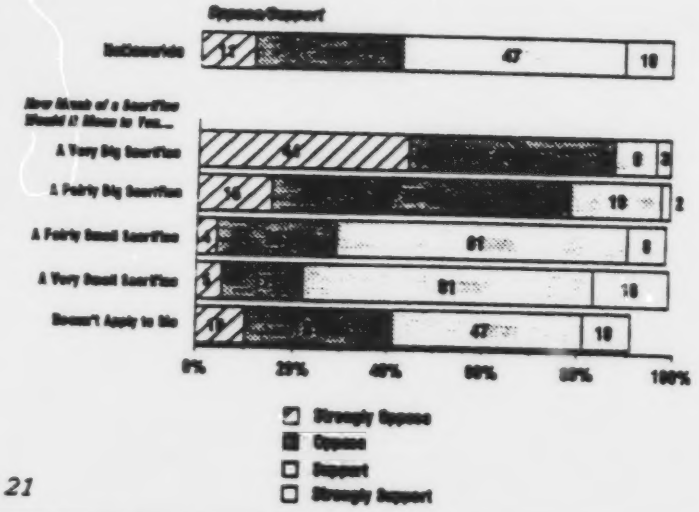

Table 21

SUPPORT FOR HAVING TO PAY AN EXTRA $1000 FOR CARS THAT GET LESS THAN 28 MILES A GALLON

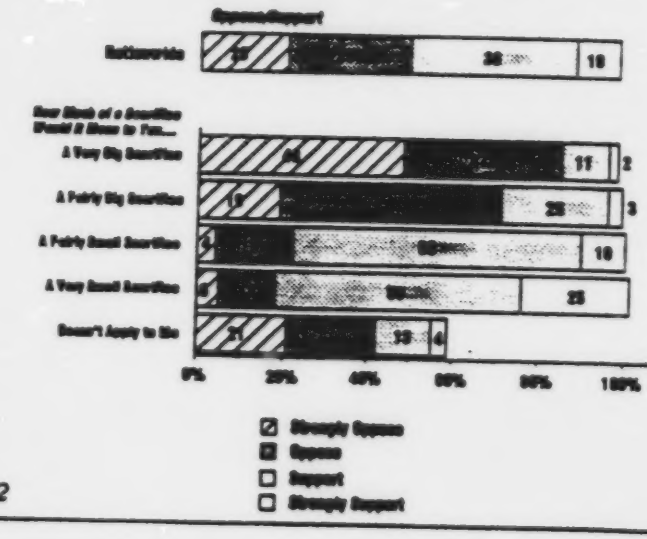

Table 22

DECIMA

SUPPORT FOR HAVING TO PAY AN EXTRA $1/LITRE FOR GASOLINE

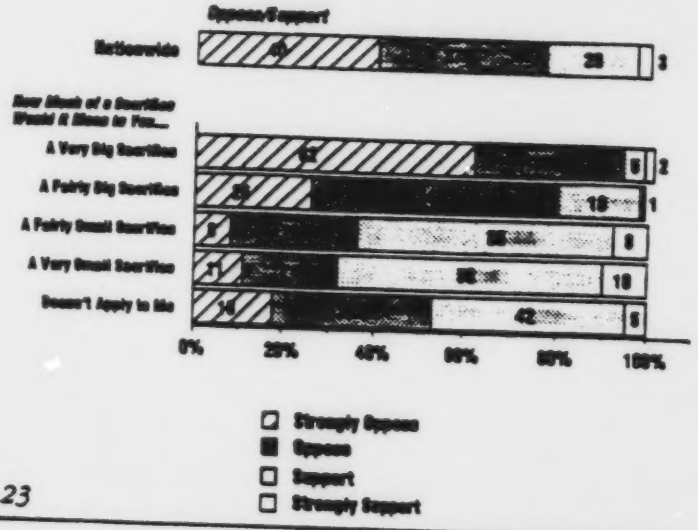

Table 23

SUPPORT FOR HAVING TO USE ONLY NON-CHEMICAL PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS ON LAWNS, GARDENS AND PARKS

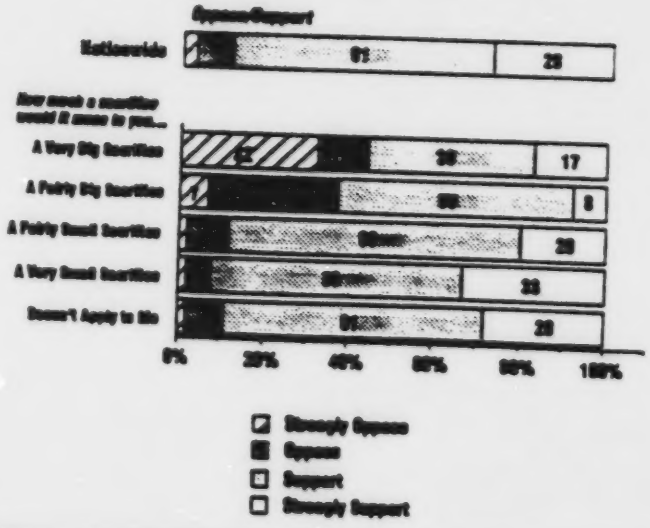

Table 24

DECIMA

SUPPORT FOR HAVING TO PAY AN EXTRA $100/YEAR TO WATER YOUR LAWN

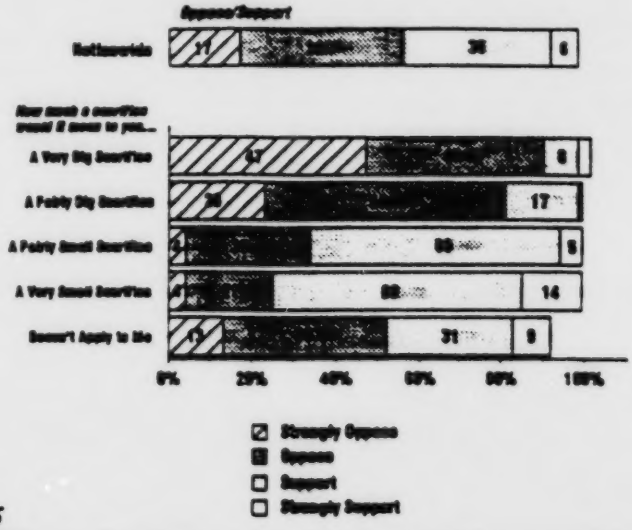

Table 25

SUPPORT FOR HAVING TO PAY 25 CENTS ON EACH GROCERY BAG YOU TAKE FROM THE STORE

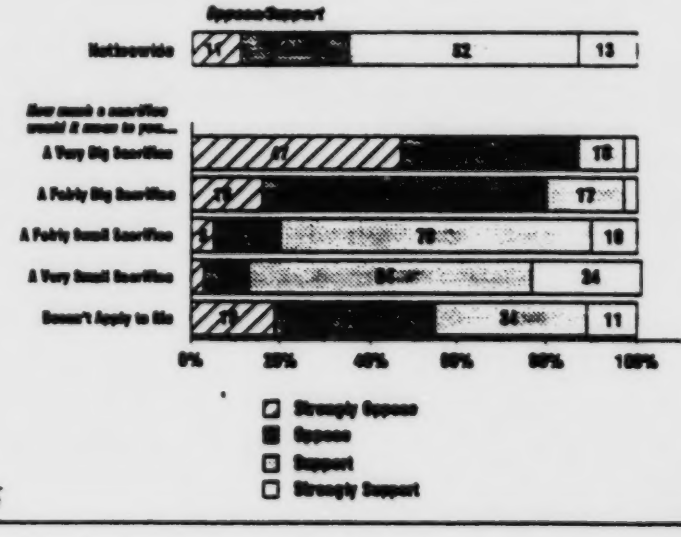

Table 26

DECIMA

SUPPORT FOR HAVING TO GIVE UP CHEMICAL HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS AND USE ONLY NATURAL CLEANERS

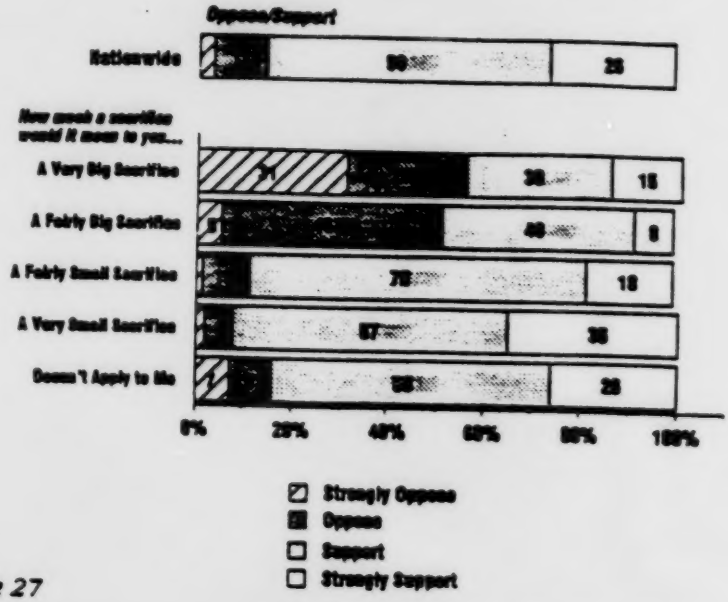

Table 27

DECIMA

The Effect of Fiscal Attitudes

The Decima Quarterly has been tracking for some time the disdain Canadians have developed for the perceived tendency of all domestic Canadian governments to constantly raise taxes. This disdain has been accompanied by a belief that governments, and in particular the federal government, waste enormous amounts of money. The obvious public conclusion has been and remains that if governments would stop wasting money, tax increases would not be required.

For this survey, we posed the following contrasting statements:

	% Agree
If the federal government stopped wasting so much money, there would be more than enough money to pay for good environmental programs	69
Even if the federal government stopped wasting money, they would have to either raise taxes or borrow more money to pay for the environmental programs we need	28

As Table 28 highlights there is not a widespread regional variation in this response.

Table 28

SOURCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDS

	% Who Think Programs Could Be Funded by Cutting Waste
Region	
British Columbia	70
Prairies	68
Ontario	73
Quebec	68
Atlantic	69

Given that the perception that government wastes enormous amounts of money has been known in the past to affect support for new government policies and programs, support for each of the eight measures tested was correlated with impressions of where the funding for new environmental policies would come from:

DECIMA

SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC INITIATIVES BY FISCAL IMPRESSIONS

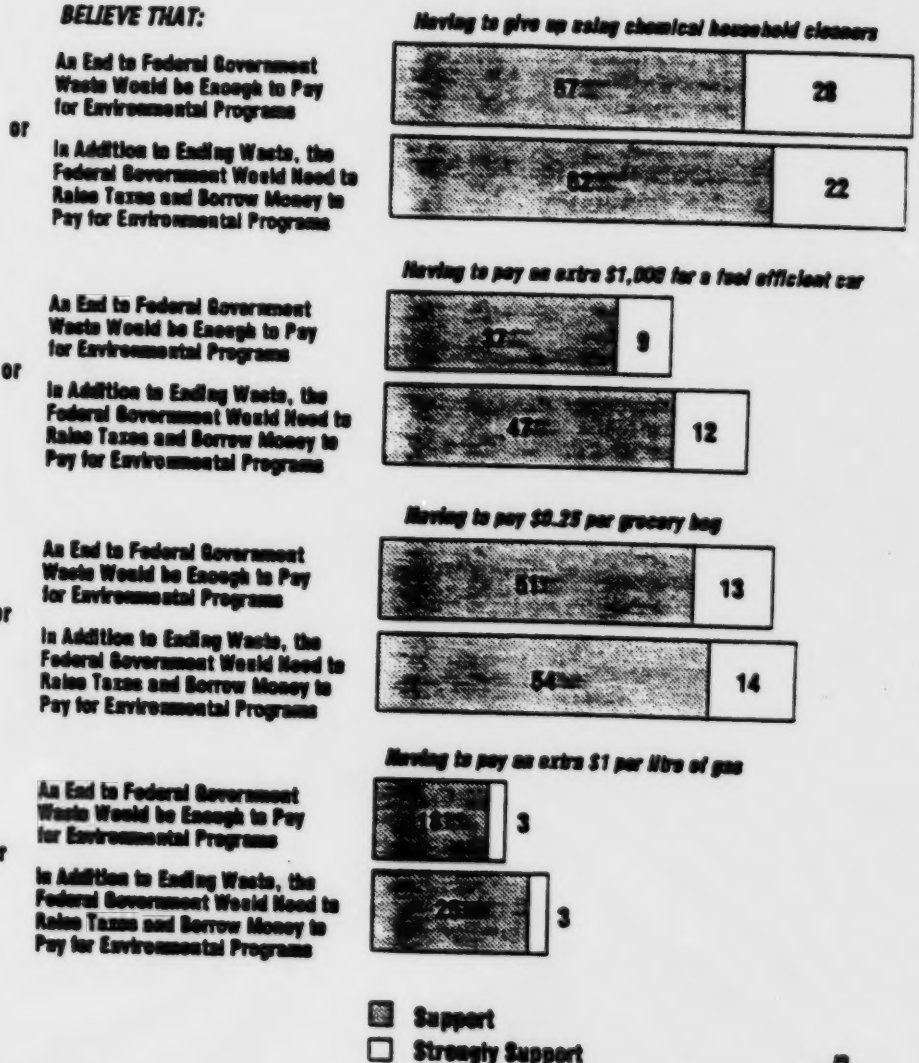

Table 29a

.../2

DECIMA

SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC INITIATIVES BY FISCAL IMPRESSIONS (Cont'd)

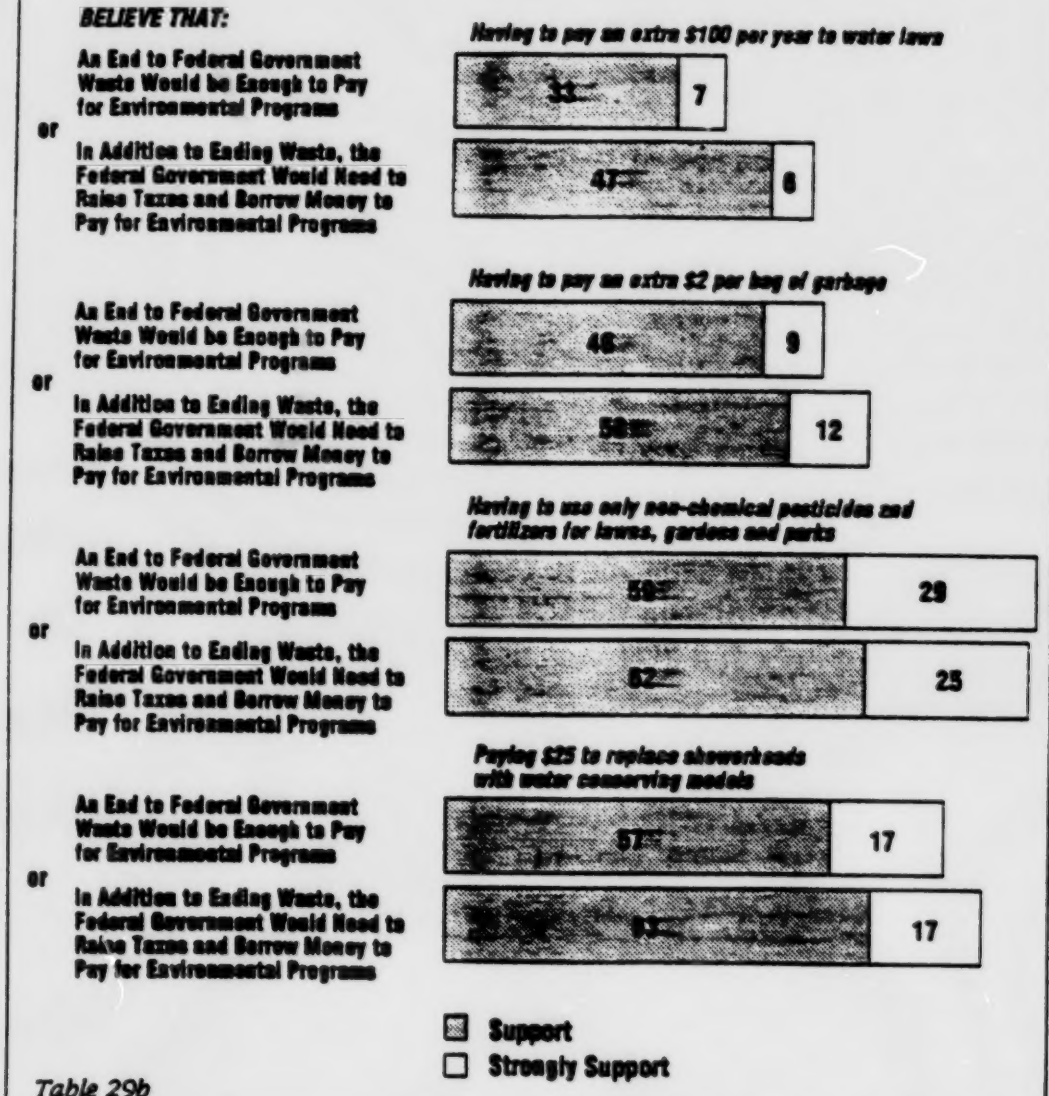
BELIEVE THAT:
An End to Federal Government Waste Would be Enough to Pay for Environmental Programs
or
In Addition to Ending Waste, the Federal Government Would Need to Raise Taxes and Borrow Money to Pay for Environmental Programs
Having to pay an extra $100 per year to water lawns
33
7
47
8
An End to Federal Government Waste Would be Enough to Pay for Environmental Programs
or
In Addition to Ending Waste, the Federal Government Would Need to Raise Taxes and Borrow Money to Pay for Environmental Programs
Having to pay an extra $2 per bag of garbage
48
9
58
12
An End to Federal Government Waste Would be Enough to Pay for Environmental Programs
or
In Addition to Ending Waste, the Federal Government Would Need to Raise Taxes and Borrow Money to Pay for Environmental Programs
Having to use only non-chemical pesticides and fertilizers for lawns, gardens and parks
59
29
62
25
An End to Federal Government Waste Would be Enough to Pay for Environmental Programs
or
In Addition to Ending Waste, the Federal Government Would Need to Raise Taxes and Borrow Money to Pay for Environmental Programs
Paying $25 to replace showerheads with water conserving models
57
17
83
17
Support
Strongly Support

Table 29b

DECIMA

In each case where the proposed measure involved asking Canadians to spend more money, support for the measure was lower among the group that believed that environmental programs could be funded out of money that is currently wasted. Not co-incidentally it would seem, the two measures which did not directly impose costs upon the public (using natural household cleaners and non-chemical pesticides and fertilizers) received almost identical levels of support from the two groups.

We know from other work that the issues of taxes and waste and inefficiency in government are of great concern to the Canadian public. Indeed it is very possible that if the public continues to believe that they are paying additional taxes directly as a result of the federal government refusing to deal effectively with waste in government, then future government initiatives that involve imposing additional costs on the public will be less warmly received than they might otherwise have been.

Government Approach to Business

As a final way of looking at how the public thinks that government should attempt to influence the behaviour of business, the following question was asked:

> When governments try to get businesses to improve their protection of the environment, they can choose between several different approaches. Which <u>one</u> of the following do you think it best?

1. Enacting laws to force businesses to behave in certain ways
2. Increasing taxes on polluters but giving tax breaks to companies which act to protect the environment
3. Publicizing and embarassing polluters
4. Informing and educating businesses so that they can take voluntary action

The results are presented in tables 30 and 31, and are correlated with impressions of the current and future states of the environment.

DECIMA

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT BY CURRENT STATE OF ENVIRONMENT

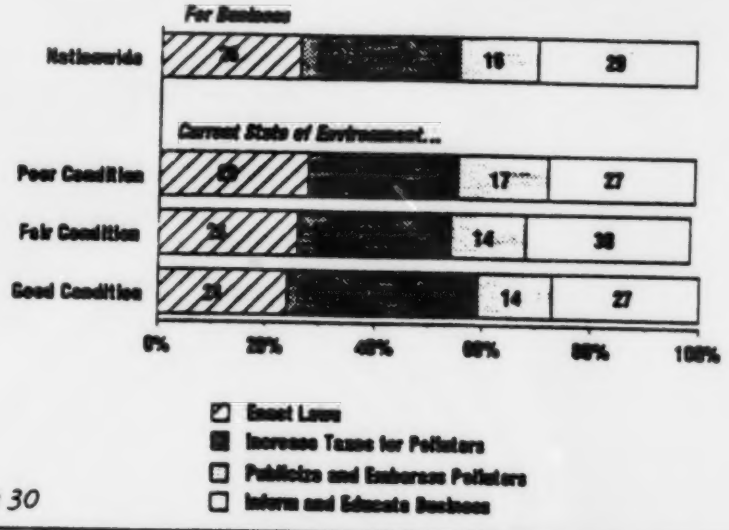

Table 30

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT BY OUTLOOK ON ENVIRONMENT

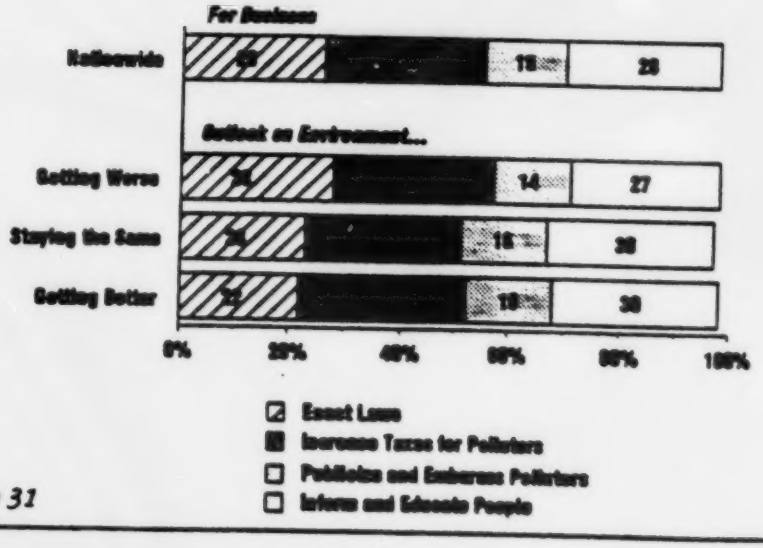

Table 31

DECIMA

Support for enacting laws to force businesses to act in certain ways seems to rise with declining views of the current and expected state of the environment. Conversely (and perhaps surprisingly), support for increasing taxes on polluters falls given the same set of beliefs. All in all, the public sees a variety of approaches working with business, including informing and educating the business sector. As the following table suggests, this last option is particularly supported by women:

Table 31(a)

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES TOWARD BUSINESS

	Men %	Women %
Enact Laws	28	24
Increase Taxes for Polluters	32	27
Publicize and Embarass Polluters	16	14
Inform and Educate People	24	33

Government Approach to the Public

We proceeded in the survey to ask a very similar question with regard to how governments should attempt to influence the behaviour of individuals:

> When governments try to influence individuals, they can try the same sorts of approaches. Which one of the following do you think is best?
>
> 1. Enacting laws to force businesses to behave in certain ways
> 2. Increasing taxes on polluters but giving tax breaks to companies which act to protect the environment
> 3. Publicizing and embarassing polluters
> 4. Informing and educating businesses so that they can take voluntary action

Results are presented in tables 32 and 33, and are again correlated with appraisals of the environment.

DECIMA

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT BY CURRENT STATE OF ENVIRONMENT

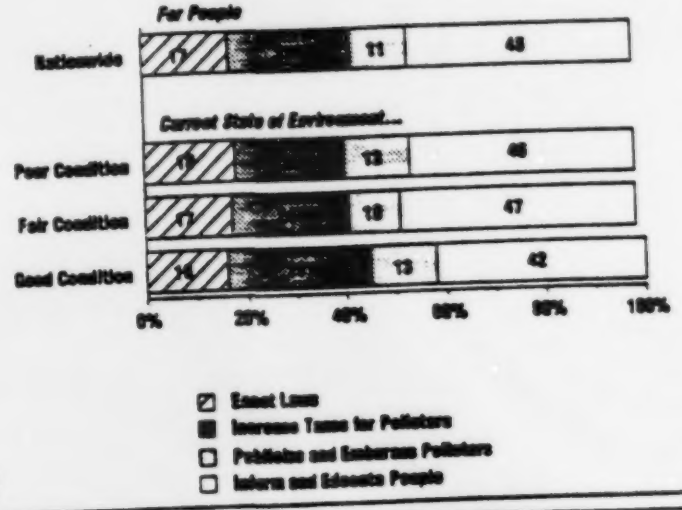

Table 32

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT BY OUTLOOK ON ENVIRONMENT

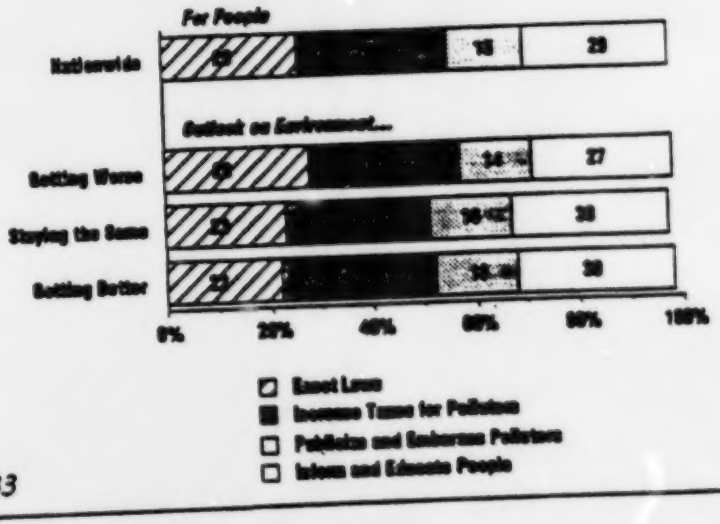

Table 33

What is most striking is the much higher level of support for informing and educating people (once again especially among women (51%) more than men (38%)) than the level that existed for informing and educating businesses. The public clearly has more confidence that it (the public) can more or less be left to its own devices to take care of the environment as long as people know what to do; they tend to see the private sector as requiring a little more forceful guidance. It is also apparent that perceptions of the current and future outlook on the environment do not seem to alter significantly the public's perception of which policy instruments to use.

Conclusion

Canadians clearly feel that while they are currently doing their fair share to help improve and protect the environment, more could be done. They even believe that tough new environmental policies will eventually win public support.

There is a strong desire on the part of the public to have more information as to how best to treat our environment given both to themselves and to business. There is also strong support for additional investment into technological advancements which could benefit the environment.

As for government initiatives which would directly impose additional costs on Canadians, we would advise caution. Our focus group work revealed that Canadians would not mind spending more to assist the environment if they thought that:

1. other parties (government, business) were pulling their "environmental weight";
2. lower cost approaches were being fully utilized;
3. governments were not continuing to waste tax dollars that could otherwise be spent on the environment.

Until these conditions are being dealt with, we suggest that Canadians would likely react with some opposition to policy measures which imposed costs directly on them.

DECIMA

IV. CLUSTER ANALYSIS

We have looked at policy options from a number of perspectives. We would now like to report on the results of our cluster analysis. For a more detailed explanation of how this analysis was done, please see the technical appendix.

Our survey sample can be broken down into four clusters:

Cluster 1 – Public and Personal Generalists: This is the largest cluster with 585 out of 1373 valid cases falling here. These people support new laws for business regulation as well as increased information on which business could base voluntary action. They support the same kinds of options for programs focused on individuals as on businesses. They are not supportive of sacrifices involving new taxes and charges, but they are highly supportive of in-home sacrifices and changes in behaviour. They have moderate support for the urgency of generalized government action, but they do not support tax breaks as rewards for good behaviour.

These are "standard" Canadians who believe in government action generally as long as it does not have too specific or punitive a thrust. They integrate their desire for public action with an acceptance that some things in their own home and surroundings must change. They distrust anything that refers to increased taxes or charges, even if only in a tangential way.

Cluster 2 – Public Generalists: These people constitute 207 out of 1373 valid cases. They support new laws and information for business and individuals, and are just slightly weaker in their support than cluster 1. They are opposed to new taxes and charges but are not as strongly opposed as cluster 1. They are strongly opposed to sacrifices involving in-home adjustments. They do not feel that general government actions on the environment are urgently needed, but they are only marginally weaker than cluster 1 on this point. They are more likely to feel that tax break rewards are urgently needed than cluster 1, but they are not the strongest cluster in this regard.

These people are not dramatically different from cluster 1 except for the fact that they are extremely negative about in-home sacrifices or changes in behaviour. Thus, one might say that they have not integrated public with personal concerns to the same extent as the members of cluster 1, the designation of "public generalists."

Cluster 3 – The Urgently Focused: This is another major cluster containing 541 out of 1373 valid cases. These people are very supportive of the idea of taxing polluters and rewarding the environmentally responsible. This is true of both corporate and individual policy. They are high on support for sacrifices involving new taxes and charges. They exhibit moderate support for in-home sacrifices, but these do not appear to be key for this group. They are very high on the urgency of both general government action and action relating to tax breaks.

These people want to see immediate action. They favour government action. Unlike cluster 1, they emphasize policies which have a focused and discernible thrust. They appear to like the immediacy of impact associated with tax penalties, tax expenditure rewards and consumption taxes.

Cluster 4 – The Cautiously Focused: This is the smallest cluster. It contains only 40 out of 1373 valid cases. Thus, it must be interpreted keeping in mind that it involves a low degree of precision. These people are fairly supportive of taxing polluters and rewarding the responsible – both companies and individuals. However, they are also extremely supportive of the idea of publicizing and embarrassing polluters. They are moderately opposed to sacrifices of all kinds. For them, general government action is definitely not urgent. They feel that tax breaks are moderately urgent.

These people, like the people in cluster 3, are most likely to approve of highly focused government action that will impact on specific companies and individuals. Their emphasis on publicity is particularly noteworthy in this regard, and they emphasize this much more than any other cluster. This seems to be combined with a cautious distrust of conventional government programming, but they are not totally adverse to tax breaks and penalties. They are not interested in making any sacrifices, perhaps feeling they have already done their share. One is tempted to say that these people have a bit of a mean- spirited, punitive focus combined with a distrust of government. This tends to lead to support for some action, but with a degree of caution.

Independent Variables and Background Factors

A descriptive unpacking of the clusters has been done using demographic variables, and this is presented below. However, the reader is urged to view the following characterizations as being descriptive rather than necessarily indicating truly significant characteristics.

Cluster 1 – The Public and Personal Generalists: This is the second youngest, second highest income, second highest educated cluster. People in it have a moderate probability of being employed. It is very urban and concentrated in Ontario more than the other clusters. It is about evenly divided between males and females.

Cluster 2 – The Public Generalists: This is the oldest cluster. They have the second lowest income. They are virtually tied for lowest education with cluster 4. They have a relatively low probability of employment, and they are slightly more likely to be male than female. Linguistically, this is the strongest clustering of Francophones of any cluster. Geographically, these people have higher Quebec and Atlantic concentrations than other clusters. They are more likely to be home owners than members of other clusters.

Cluster 3 – The Urgently Focused: This is the youngest, highest income, most educated and most likely to be employed cluster. By young, we mean that they are slightly more likely to be in their 30's than their 40's. In this sample, they are about equally divided between male and female. This cluster has the highest British Columbia concentration and a moderately high Prairie concentration.

Cluster 4 – The Cautiously Focused: Keeping in mind that this is a very small cluster, this is the second oldest, lowest income, tied for least educated and least likely to be employed cluster. These people are the least likely to own a car and have the lowest likelihood of home ownership. They live in relatively small communities and have a high Prairie concentration. They are slightly more likely to be male than female. They are more likely than any other cluster to claim some non-charter ethnicity.

Conclusion

Our attempt to cluster Canadians on the basis of their environmental attitudes was not terribly revealing. A number of different attitudes toward the environment are held widely across the country, and the degree of variation amongst them is not very significant. Therefore, if either policy or communications activities are to be tailored to particular population clusters, it is our opinion that further work on cluster characteristics is required.

DECIMA

V. OTHER ISSUES

Fossil Fuels

Canadians clearly believe that the traditional methods of using and producing energy cannot continue unadjusted. As Table 34 suggests, nearly half the population believe we will have to drastically change our ways of producing and using energy if we are to protect our environment. People who consider the environment to be getter better are somewhat more likely to believe that only a few changes are required to make energy use safe for the environment.

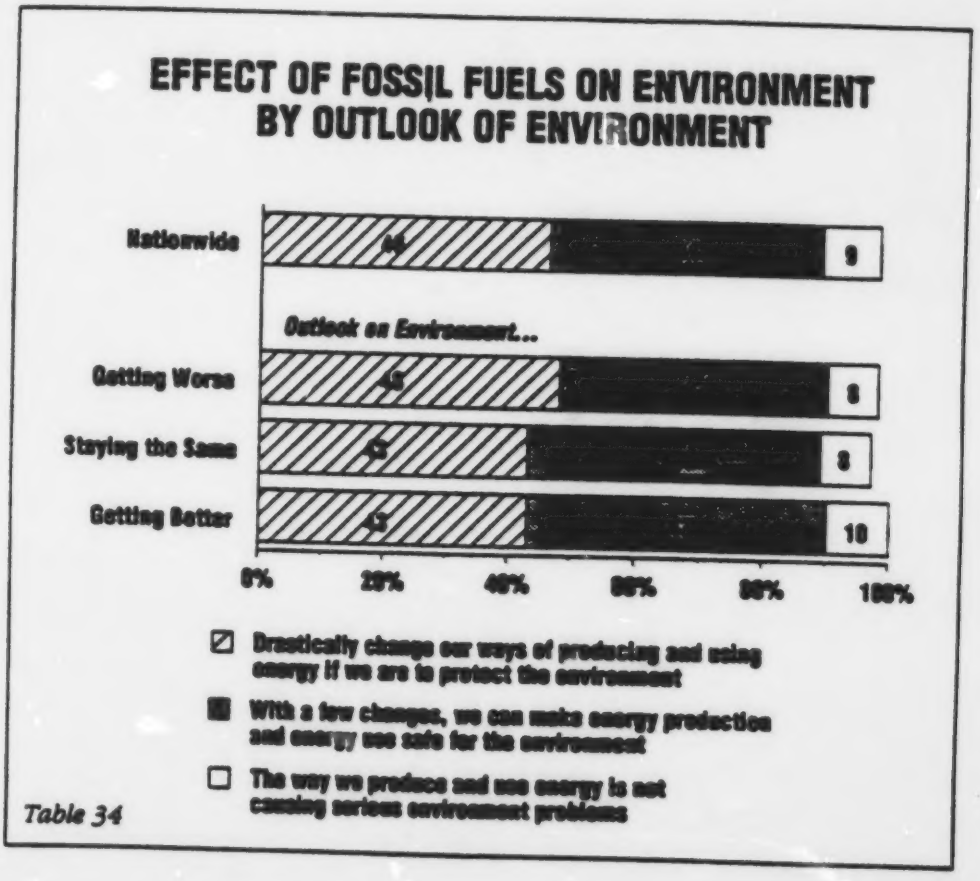
EFFECT OF FOSSIL FUELS ON ENVIRONMENT
BY OUTLOOK OF ENVIRONMENT
Nationwide
9
Outlook on Environment...
Getting Worse
8
Staying the Same
8
Getting Better
10
0%
100%
Drastically change our ways of producing and using energy if we are to protect the environment
With a few changes, we can make energy production and energy use safe for the environment
The way we produce and use energy is not causing serious environment problems

Table 34

DECIMA

International Trade Issues

In order to determine the public's views on environmental issues facing Third World and developing countries, two questions were asked (see questions 56 and 57 in the Interview Schedule).

EFFECT OF FOSSIL FUELS ON ENVIRONMENT BY CANADA'S POSITION IN TERMS OF PROTECTING ITS ENVIRONMENT

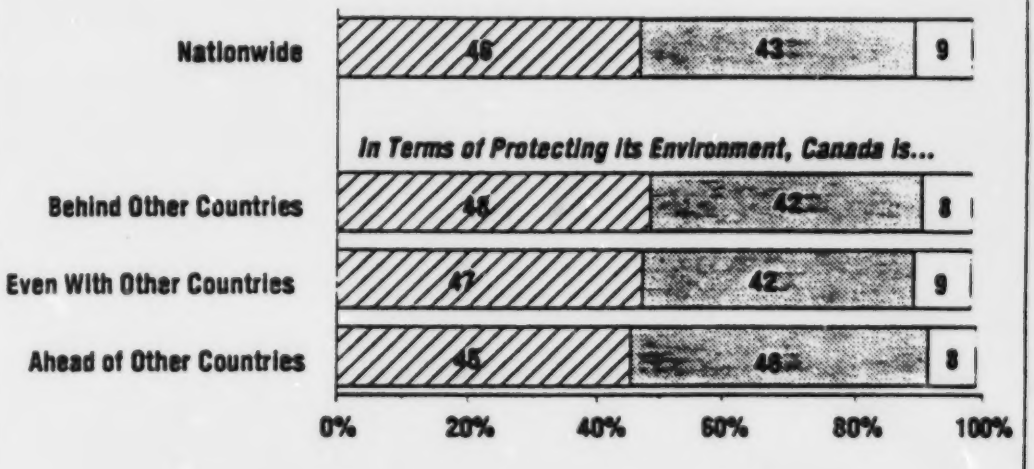

Table 35

DECIMA

International Trade Issues

In order to determine the public's views on environmental issues facing Third World and developing countries, two questions were asked (see questions 56 and 57 in the Interview Schedule).

Only about one in five Canadians in each case believe the status quo is sufficient. In the case of third world countries, Canadians prefer proactive financial assistance to help these countries deal with their environmental programs. We should point out however that other research indicates that financial aid to third world countries is coming under increased criticism from the Canadian public as our national debt grows, taxes continue to rise and the recession deepens.

In the case of other developing countries, Canadians seem prepared to reduce trade even at the cost of higher prices to force environmental change. They seem especially attracted to this idea if Canada acts collectively with other countries. This is most likely for two reasons:

1. a belief that collective action would be more effective; and
2. a predisposition to accept the sacrifice of paying higher prices if it was known that residents of other countries were making the same sacrifice.

National Parks

Given the option, Canadians prefer to see our national parks developed in a way that protects nature rather than developing them to encourage their use for recreational purposes.

If you could choose only <u>one</u> of the following two options to improve Canada's system of national parks, would you choose to...

	% Response
Develop our national parks in a way that encourages their increased use by Canadians for recreation, such as for skiing and golfing	15
or	
Develop parks in a way that primarily serves to protect nature	83

DECIMA

As Table 36 reveals, younger people are especially likely to feel this way:

Table 36

Age	**% Who Think Parks Should Be Developed Primarily in a Way that Protects Nature**
18-29	86
30-39	90
40-49	79
50-59	78
60 and over	60

This concern for the protection of nature followed through into the public's preferred location of new national parks. Once again, age was the most significant determinant of the demographic variation:

Table 37

	National Parks Should be Located:		
Age	**Where There Are Currently No Parks**	**In Areas of National Beauty**	**In Sensitive Ecological Areas**
18-29	15	20	63
30-39	14	21	63
40-49	17	23	58
50-59	14	34	49
60 and over	17	34	43

DECIMA

VI. OPTIMISM

One of our primary findings from this study is the sense of optimism Canadians feel toward the environmental issues. We provided the following contrasting statements:

	% Response
I am starting to feel more hopeful about environmental issues	70
or	
I am not feeling any more hopeful about environmental issues	29

As Table 38 demonstrates, Canadians who believe the environment is currently in poor condition are less likely to feel a sense of optimism. Having said this, 61% do believe that optimism is warranted:

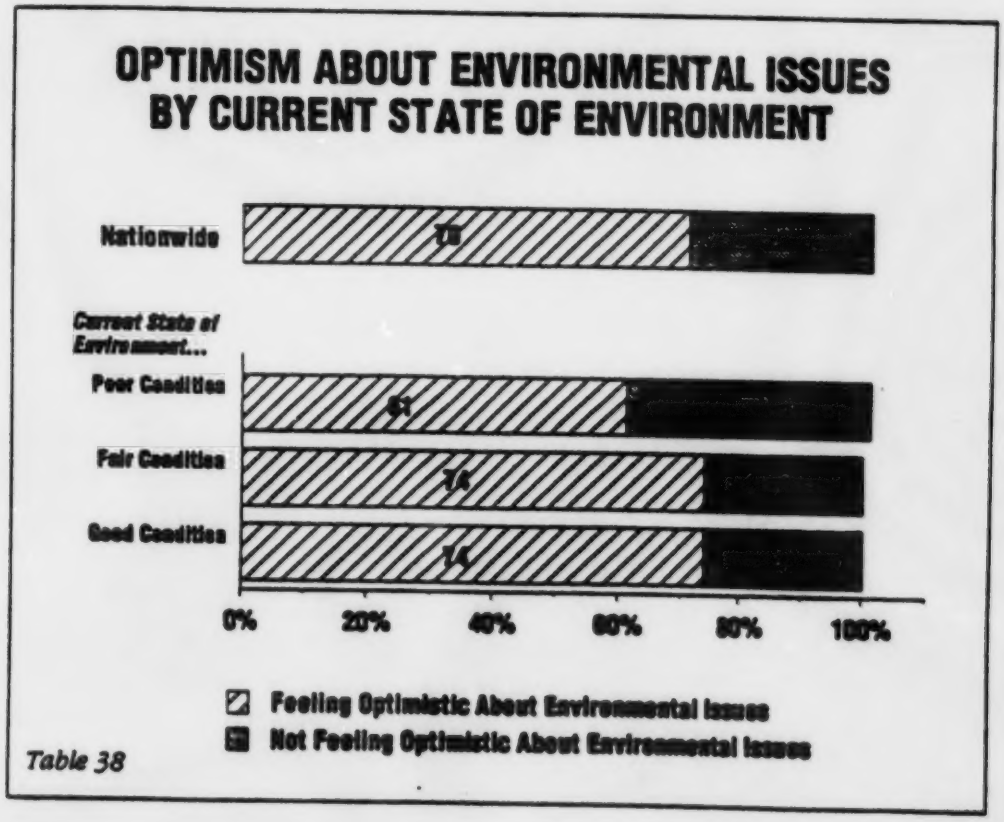

Table 38

DECIMA

Even two thirds of those people who believe the environment is getting worse are able to say that they have a sense of optimism. This reinforces the point made earlier that Canadians are not optimistic in the short term, but they do feel that environmental conditions will improve over the medium to long term:

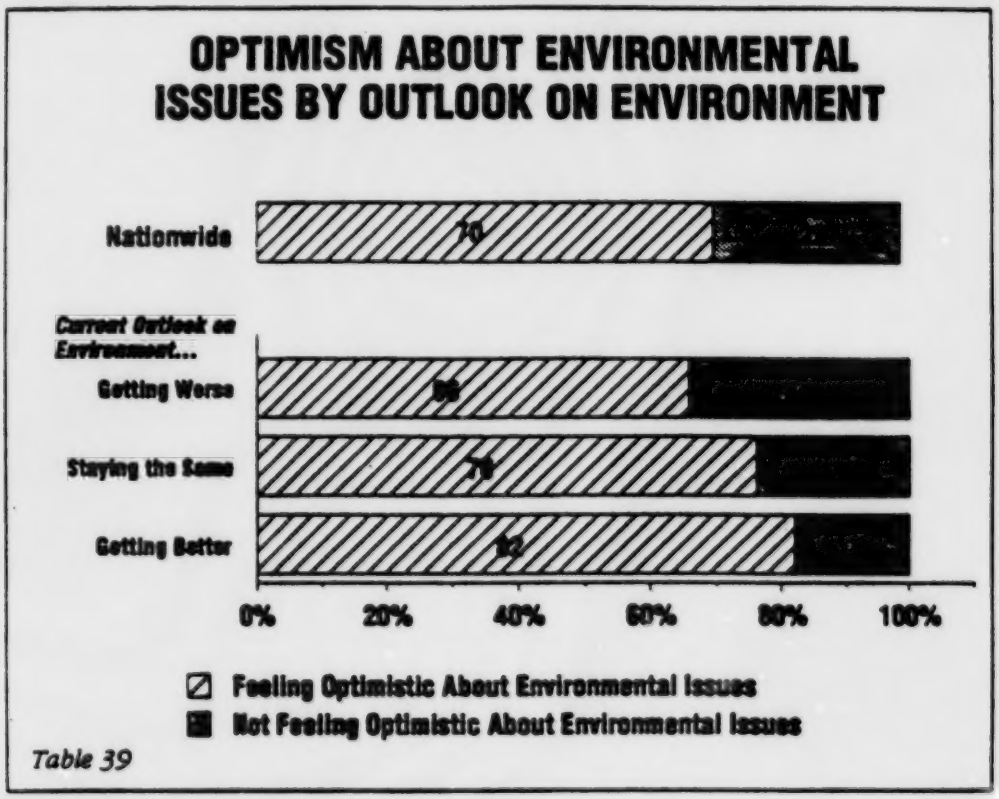

Table 39

DECIMA

Reason for Optimism

To determine why those people who do feel a sense of optimism have that sense, we asked the following question:

Which one of the following things is helping you feel more hopeful?

	% Response
I am convinced governments are trying harder to find solutions	13
I am convinced businesses are trying harder to find solutions	13
I am convinced that ordinary people are trying harder to find solutions	72

Clearly governments and businesses are not given much of the credit for inspiring this sense of optimism. Even those who believe the environment is in good condition give most of the credit to the actions of ordinary citizens:

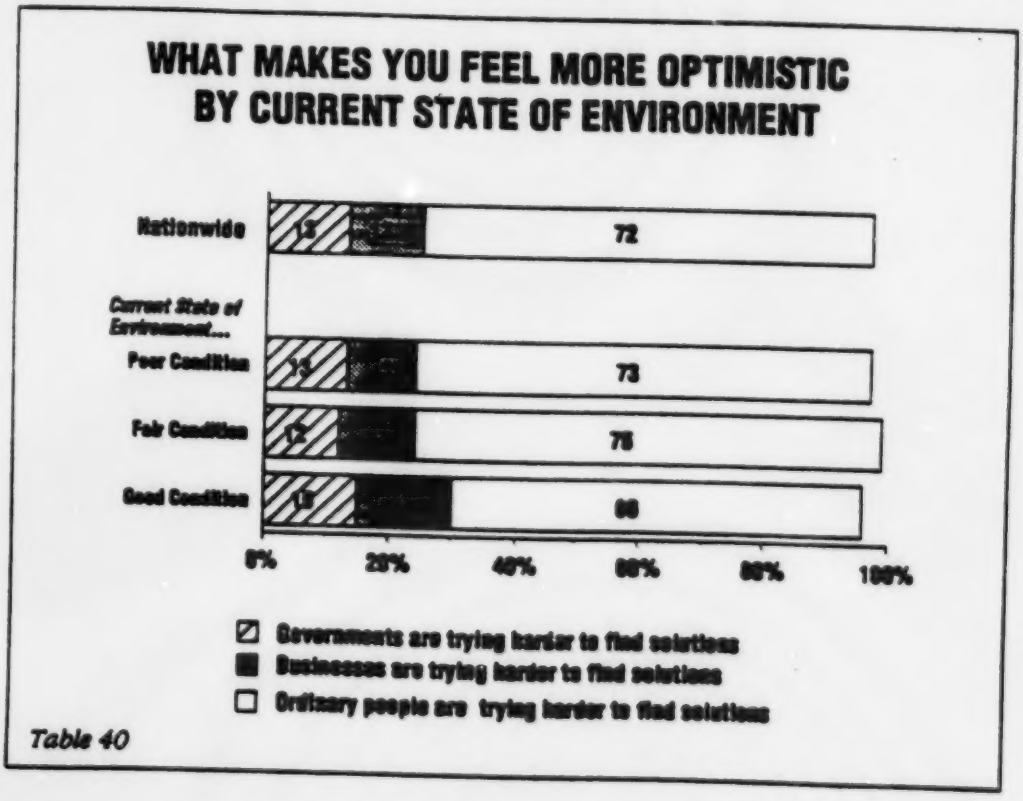

Table 40

DECIMA

The chart on the following page demonstrates well this sense of optimism that Canadians feel toward the environment. The public feels it has become engaged on this issue and that this engagement will produce the desired result. What this means for government policy is two fold:

1. The government must harness the environmental goodwill of the public so that it is directed in ways that are most beneficial to the environment;
2. The government will likely get little of the credit for an improving environment.

This sense of optimism and collective empowerment is best captured by the last question in our survey which asked about society-environmental relations:

	% Response
Some people say that society will always work in a way that harms the environment.	19
Other people say that society can someday work in a way that ensures a healthy environment.	80

As Table 41 highlights, eight out of ten Canadians believe that our society can someday work in a way that ensures a healthy environment. This is true regardless of current perceptions of the environment.

DECIMA

INTERACTION OF SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT BY CURRENT STATE OF ENVIRONMENT

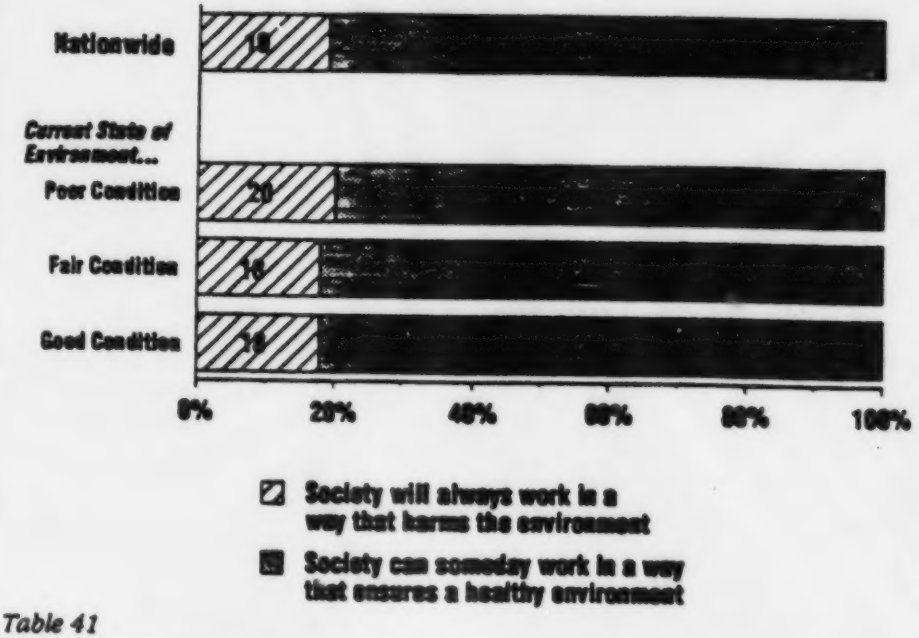

Table 41

DECIMA

VII. CONCLUSIONS

We draw five main conclusions from our report:

1. Canadians have a strong appetite for more action and progress in the environmental area. This is a priority of the average Canadian, who also feels the environment should be a priority of the federal government. Canadians do not see the environment the same way they see many other issues. It is not an issue for which action can be put off while other policy priorities are dealt with.

2. No one issue predominates. The environmental issues that are of most concern to Canadians can be local, national or international. Canadians certainly feel that the environmental issue must be addressed as a whole, and not in a piecemeal fashion. Perhaps most importantly, Canadians do not see the objectives of economic growth and environmental protection to be mutually exclusive. In fact to the general public, these objectives are almost mutually inclusive. Canadians do not believe that a robust economy could be maintained over the long run in the absence of a healthy economy.

3. Canadians feel empowered to take the measures that will lead to environmental improvement and protection. They do not blame themselves so much for the problems that have occurred up to date, but they do see themselves as the likely sources of solutions to environmental problems. When asked who is doing their fair share to help achieve a healthy environment Canadians are most likely to point to themselves ahead of government or business. This raises a tricky problem for government: how to convince Canadians that some behavioural change is required while not appearing to blame Canadians for environmental problems that have been experienced to date.

4. Relatedly, Canadians would not mind federal government leadership in this area, but they would mind the federal government claiming ownership of the issue. It should be restated; Canadians see themselves as the "good guys" in this situation; governments and business must still prove themselves.

5. Finally, Canadians are optimistic about the environment. They do think that things may get worse in the short run, but in the medium to long term they are convinced that society can work in a way that ensures a healthy environment.

All in all, the federal government must walk a fine line in the environmental area. Canadians want to act, and they want government and business to act, in ways that assist the environment. But Canadians are very optimistic that things will get better. This suggests that the government should not adopt a threatening, negative stance in this policy area eg. "we've got to clean up our act or else", but rather adopt a more positive proactive stance – "this is the government's plan to ensure a healthy environment."

DECIMA

A. SURVEY OVERVIEW

Decima Research is pleased to present to Environment Canada, the results and analysis for a study designed to investigate the following areas:

- A benchmark study of public attitudes, understanding and awareness of the environment and issues of most salience;
- An analysis of the tradeoffs Canadians are willing to make to achieve environmental quality;
- A measure of the public's sense of the appropriate roles and responsibilities for each individuals, governments, industry and environmental groups;
- A test of potential methods of encouraging Canadians to act in environmentally-responsible ways;

Vice-President and principal investigator for this study was Gary Breen who was assisted in the various phases of research and analysis by Ashraf Hossain and Justin Lewis.

1. Sample Selection

The population consists of all Canada. Male and female respondents were selected in the same proportion as the general population. A total of 1,500 interviews were compieted.

Effective survey research must be based on a sample truly representative of the universe of interest. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to gather the data for this study. The essential feature of this procedure is that individual respondents are predetermined by the selection procedure itself. That predetermination is made by careful selection of a series of controlled choices.

The sampling technique produced a systematic random sample with probability of selection disproportionate to size at the regional level. The first step in the sampling procedure was the division of Canada into strata or "regions," i.e., British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan etc. (Table A).

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2. Confidence Limits and Validation

The sample of cases produces results which are accurate for the population of Canada as a whole within ± 2.53 percentage points 95 out of 100 times.

While the most sophisticated procedures have been used to collect and analyze the information presented herein, it must be remembered that surveys are not predictions. They are designed to measure public opinion within identifiable statistical limits of accuracy at specific points in time. This survey is in no way a prediction of opinion or behaviour at any future point in time.

Table A

SAMPLE STRATA

REGIONS	PPS N
British Columbia	250
Alberta	250
Saskatchewan	120
Manitoba	130
Balance of Ontario	188
Metropolitan Toronto	62
Quebec	250
New Brunswick	79
Nova Scotia	95
Prince Edward Island	14
Newfoundland	62
Total	**1500**

Table A presents the total population of Canada represented in each region.

Within each of these strata, a sampling procedure was employed which is based upon mapping the linkage between the geographic location of individual telephone exchanges and Statistics Canada's fundamental building block for the census -- the enumeration area (EA).

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Telephone companies divide their service regions into smaller areas served by a single switching centre. Within each switching centre area, all telephone numbers begin with the same two digits. We refer to these mutually exclusive exchange areas as NNXs (NNX representing the first three digits of a telephone number). Using census data together with maps showing the geographic boundaries of NNXs, it is possible to determine exact population figures for each NNX and determine the appropriate number of respondents to be surveyed in each NNX.

Primary sampling units (groups of NNXs) and secondary sampling units (individual NNXs) were selected on the basis of probability proportionate to population size. Telephone numbers were then generated using a computerized random number generation program employing random start and fixed interval methods. This method allows us to reach people who have recently moved and those people with unlisted numbers. In this way, our sample becomes even more representative of the national population.

1. Pretest

In order to refine the questionnaire, a pretest was conducted. Interviews were conducted by experienced interviewers and the Research Analyst monitored these interviews while they were in progress. The Field Supervisor and Research Analyst held a debriefing session to discuss the questionnaire with the interviewers. Based on the pretest results, a few minor changes were made to the questionnaire which facilitated the field portion of the study. The client was informed of the pretest results and approved the changes.

2. Field Procedures

The questionnaires were printed, consecutively numbered and assembled into field packs of three interviews – two males and one female or two females and one male. The interviews took place between August 16 and August 24. Weekday interviewing was conducted between the hours of 5:30 and 10:00 p.m. Weekend interviewing was conducted between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The questionnaire contained 107 questions and took approximately 40 minutes to complete. Fifteen percent (15%) of all interviews were monitored while in progress for procedure and content from an extension monitor. All interviews were carefully edited as soon as they were completed to ensure that no questions were omitted and that skip-patterns were followed correctly.

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Experienced telephone interviewers were used to collect the data. A briefing was held by the Field Supervisor, and the Research Analyst was present to answer questions or clarify procedures. The Field Supervisor first read the questionnaire to the interviewers, thereby ensuring that pronunciation would be correct and uniform, and second, interviewer-respondent role-playing was used to illustrate skip and rotation patterns. The interviewers then had an opportunity to ask questions.

On the first evening in the field, the Research Analyst listened to the interviewers on an extension monitor. The monitor prevents the interviewer and respondent from knowing they are being listened to. This ensured that the skip and rotation patterns were followed correctly and that there were no questions causing interviewers any particular difficulty. When an error was caught, the interviewer was briefed again and the respondent was called back in order to correct the questionnaire.

Questionnaires were printed, assigned to sample points and assembled into field packets. Questionnaires were precoded "male" and "female." Each field packet contained either three "male" surveys and two "female" surveys, or vice versa, thus ensuring that an equal number of males and females would be interviewed. Field packets included: sample point addresses, a record of attempted contacts and callbacks, replacement sequence instructions, a respondent selection grid, interviewer manuals, and five questionnaires. Each interviewer was also given a series of prerotated card helps (or illustrative prompts) used to assist the interviewer in explaining difficult or long questions, and in obtaining responses to sensitive questions.

Within each primary sampling unit or census subdivision selected, one address per cluster was randomly drawn from the most recent telephone directory corresponding to the area as a "start" address. Five interviews were completed within each cluster as the best trade-off between dispersion of the sample within the area and cost efficiency of interviewing. The actual number of clusters varied depending on the total sample required per census subdivision.

All eligible members of households were enumerated using a modified Trodahl-Carter Grid. Using the grids to select household members ensured that the sample was representative of age and sex in the population; respondent replacement within households was not permitted. At least three attempts were made to interview the respondent before household replacement.

All work was edited by the Senior Field Supervisor, checked for completeness, quality and skip-pattern adherence. Then 15% of each interviewer's work was verified; that is, respondents were contacted by telephone and were asked to verify that the interview actually took place. Respondents were also asked to answer a few questions from the questionnaire in order to check the accuracy of the data collected.

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3. Coding

The questionnaires were coded and the data were entered by experienced Decima personnel. The following standard procedures were followed:

- An initial briefing;
- Supervision of trained staff; and
- Verification of 15% of each coder's work.

Using the first 25% of completed questionnaires in each stratum, codes were constructed for the open-end questions by sorting and writing out the responses into independent categories. The Research Analyst checked all categories for completeness and consistency.

4. Data Processing

The entry and processing of the data were carried out on-site using Decima's Digital PDP 11/44 computer. Decima's interactive software system, designed specifically for survey analysis, has a robust data entry facility which permits cleaning of the data, including out-of-range values and skip-pattern errors, as well as other logic errors. The fully cleaned data were then summarized into aggregate tables. Further analysis of the data included crosstabulation tables, measures of association, regression analysis, factor analysis, cluster analysis, and discriminant analysis.

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B. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

PERSONAL/CONFIDENTIAL
SUMMERHILL RESEARCH CENTRE
One Eglinton Avenue
Seventh Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M4P 3A1

Study #3919-02

Time Started _____

Time Ended _____

Approved _____ Coding ____ Field
_____ D.P. ____ Research

August, 1990

16911317

Hello, my name is _____ of Summerhill Research Centre, a national opinion research firm. We're talking with people in your area today about issues facing us all. (DO NOT PAUSE)

A. Are you 18 years of age or older and a Canadian resident?

Yes (CONTINUE) . . . . . A
No (ASK TO SPEAK TO ELIGIBLE RESPONDENT, IF STILL "NO," THANK AND TERMINATE) . . . . . B

B. Have I reached you at your home phone number? Which is ( ) _____?

Yes (CONTINUE) . . . . . A
No (ASK TO SPEAK TO ELIGIBLE RESPONDENT, IF STILL "NO," THANK AND TERMINATE) . . . . . B

C. Do you, or does anyone in your family or household work in the following kinds of business...a market research firm, advertising agency, public relations firm, or the news media?

Yes (THANK AND TERMINATE – RECORD INCIDENCE ON CALL RECORD SHEET) . . . . . A
No (CONTINUE) . . . . . B

---

1. In your view, what is the most important environmental issue today, that is, the one that concerns you the most? (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE) (RESPONSE MUST BE AT LEAST 10 WORDS IN LENGTH)

Water Pollution	17
Air Pollution	14
Garbage - General	12
Ozone Layer	9
Acid Raid	8
Recycling	8
Industrial Pollution	7
Forestry/Wildlife	6
Pollution - General	6
Don't Know	7

---

2. How would you assess the current state of the environment in Canada? Would you say that it is in very good condition, good condition, fair condition, poor condition or very poor condition? (READ AND ROTATE) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Very poor condition	5
Poor condition	21
Fair condition	49
Good condition	21
Very good condition	3
No Opinion	5

---

3. And do you think the condition of the environment in Canada is... (READ AND ROTATE) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Getting worse	64
Staying the same	20
Getting better	16

---

4. In terms of taking measures to improve protection of the environment, compared to other industrialized countries, would you say that Canada is ahead of other countries, even with other countries or behind other countries? (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Behind other countries	23
Even with other countries	46
Ahead of other countries	27

---

5. Which of the following countries or group of countries do you think is furthest ahead in terms of taking measures to improve protection of the environment? Would it be... (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE) (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

The United States	12
Canada	20
Great Britain	5
The Soviet Union	2
Scandinavian countries such as Sweden and Norway	52

Thinking about the following, would you say they are doing more than their fair share, about their fair share, or less than their fair share to ensure a healthy environment? How about... (READ AND ROTATE Q6 TO Q11)

		Less Than Their Fair Share	About Their Fair Share	More Than Their Fair Share
6.	the federal government	64	32	3
7.	your provincial government	56	39	4
8.	the people in your neighbourhood or community	34	55	10
9.	your municipal government	41	50	7
10.	industry and business generally	66	29	4
11.	you personally	22	63	14

END OF ROTATION

There are several different issues that people talk about when they are discussing the environment. For each of the following issues having to do with the atmosphere, I would like you to tell me which you think is the most important, the second most important and so on. The choices are...(READ LIST) Which do you think is the most important...? (ACCEPT RESPONSE NUMBER ONLY ONCE)

		Rank (1-4)		Optimistic	Pessimistic
12.	Global Warming	2.97	16.	57	40
13.	Depletion of the ozone layer	1.91	17.	61	38
14.	Acid rain	2.33	18.	62	36
15.	The quality of the air where you live	2.78	19.	73	26

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ONCE ALL FOUR HAVE BEEN RANKED, REVISIT BY RANKED ORDER AND ASK: on the question of (e.g. Global warming) would you say you are generally optimistic or pessimistic about society's ability to solve the problem in the future? (REPEAT FOR EACH ITEM)

END OF ROTATION

There are also issues which people talk about which have to do with water resources. For each of the following, I'd like you to tell me which is the most important, the second most important, and so on. The choices are... (READ AND ROTATE LIST) Which do you think is the most important...? (ACCEPT RESPONSE NUMBER ONLY ONCE)

		Rank (1-3)		Optimistic	Pessimistic
20.	The quality of local drinking water	1.64	23.	78	21
21.	Ocean pollution around our coastline	2.15	24.	53	45
22.	The quality of recreational waters, such as lakes and rivers in your region	2.23	25.	68	31

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ONCE ALL THREE HAVE BEEN RANKED, REVISIT BY RANKED ORDER AND ASK: on the question of (e.g. The quality of local drinking water) would you say you are generally optimistic or pessimistic about society's ability to solve the problem in the future? (REPEAT FOR EACH ITEM)

END OF ROTATION

There are other issues which have to do with a variety of environmental questions. For each of the following issues, I would like you to tell me which you think is the most important, the second most important and so on. The choices are... (READ AND ROTATE LIST) Which do you think is the most important...? (ACCEPT RESPONSE NUMBER ONLY ONCE)

		Rank (1-5)		Optimistic	Pessimistic
26.	Soil erosion and contamination	2.84	31.	60	38
27.	The destruction of our forests	1.92	32.	58	40
28.	The loss of wilderness areas	3.18	33.	56	42
29.	Arctic pollution	3.95	34.	59	37
30.	Fish stocks	3.11	35.	61	38

INTERVIEWER NOTE: ONCE ALL FIVE HAVE BEEN RANKED, REVISIT BY RANKED ORDER AND ASK: on the question of (e.g. The destruction of our forests) would you say you are generally optimistic or pessimistic about society's ability to solve the problem in the future? (REPEAT FOR EACH ITEM)

END OF ROTATION

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36. Some people have expressed concern over the way chemicals and chemical products are produced, used and disposed. Would you say that you are very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic or very pessimistic about society's ability to solve problems of this nature in the future? (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Very pessimistic	17
Somewhat pessimistic	32
Somewhat optimistic	41
Very optimistic	10

---

37. Some people have also expressed concern over the way we are disposing of our garbage and other wastes. Would you say you are very optimistic, somewhat optimistic, somewhat pessimistic or very pessimistic about society's ability to solve our waste disposal problem in the future? (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Very pessimistic	14
Somewhat pessimistic	26
Somewhat optimistic	49
Very optimistic	11

I would like to read you different statements people have made about various environmental issues. Please tell me how you personally feel about each statement by giving me a number between -5 and +5, where "-5" means you totally disagree with the statement and "+5" means you totally agree with the statement. Many people's opinions fall somewhere in between these two points depending on how they feel about the statement. The first statement is...(ROTATE STATEMENTS 38 - 51..READ FIRST STATEMENT...REPEAT SCALE INSTRUCTIONS IF REQUESTED) Where would you place yourself on this scale?

TOTALLY DISAGREE DEPENDS TOTALLY AGREE

-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5

		RATING -5 TO +5
38.	If we don't have a healthy environment, we don't have a healthy economy over the long run.	3.02
39.	Government must consult the public before taking steps to improve the environment.	2.22
40.	Governments don't have to force people to be environmentally responsible by raising taxes and prices, people will do so voluntarily for the good of the environment.	-0.09
41.	We don't need new environmental laws, we just need to enforce the ones we already have	0.10
42.	Canadians shouldn't be allowed to cut down healthy trees even on their own property.	-0.10
43.	If government got tougher on people in an effort to improve the environment, we might be bothered for a while but eventually we'll support the effort.	2.91
44.	Achieving a better environment will mean significant changes in my lifestyle.	2.43
45.	I'm concerned that my community will soon run out of room for disposing of its garbage.	1.93
46.	I personally do a fair number of things which are bad for the environment.	-0.03
47.	If someone has to pay more to protect the environment, it should be businesses and not individual Canadians.	0.98

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TOTALLY DISAGREE DEPENDS TOTALLY AGREE

-5 -4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4 +5

		RATING -5 TO +5
48.	In order to be competitive with other countries, Canada's environmental laws should not be tougher than those of our competitors, even if that means we will have to reduce our expectations for a cleaner environment.	-1.24
49.	My provincial government seems more concerned about the environment than the federal government.	0.23
50.	There's been enough talk about the environment, its time to get moving.	3.88
51.	It's the federal government's responsibility to get along with environmental groups, not the other way around.	2.08

END OF ROTATION

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52. Who in your view has the primary responsibility for taking action to protect and improve the environment. Would it be...(READ AND ROTATE) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

The federal government. 6
The provincial government. 3
Your municipal government 2
All three governments have equal responsibility 89

---

53. Assuming that governments, industry and consumers can cooperate, how long do you think it is going to take to clean up the environment to a satisfactory level. Do you think it is going to take...(ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Less than five years 3
Five to ten years 10
Longer than ten years 12
It will be an ongoing effort that will never really end 76

---

54. In your opinion, which of the following government policies is most likely to lead to improving environmental conditions in Canada? Would it be...(READ AND ROTATE LIST) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Supporting the development of new technologies that help protect or clean up the environment 27
Informing and educating Canadians about the environment 40
Enforcing existing regulations and fines. 20
Using the tax system to change the environmental behaviour of people and companies 12

---

55. Some people say if government developed a broad education program to teach people and companies how to behave in ways which are better for the environment, that would be sufficient.

Others say that while the education effort is important, the government will have to assist in developing new technologies if we are going to solve environmental problems.

Which point of view is closer to your own? (READ LIST) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

If government developed a broad education program to teach people and companies how to behave in ways which are better for the environment 25
Government will assist in developing f new technologies. 74

---

56. As you may know, many Third World countries have been criticized for not taking steps to protect their environment. In order to encourage the protection of the environment in these countries and elsewhere, which of the following would you most support the federal government doing? Would it be..(READ AND ROTATE LIST) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Reducing financial assistance to Third World countries which ignore environmental concerns 27
Increasing financial assistance to these countries so that they can develop in a way that reduces harm to the environment. 45
Not changing financial assistance levels to these countries because of environmental concerns 24

---

57. Other developing countries are being criticized for rapidly expanding their industries, but not worrying about what effect they are having on the environment. In an effort to help protect the environment in these countries and elsewhere, which of the following would you support the federal government doing? Would it be... (READ AND ROTATE) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Reducing trade with developing countries which ignore environmental concerns, even if that means we pay higher prices for some products 27
Organizing other countries along with Canada to reduce trade with these developing countries that ignore environmental concerns, even if that means we pay higher prices for some products 52
Keep trading as we currently do with these developing countries, even if that means the environment suffers 17

Several different things have been identified that Canadians could do to help protect and improve our environment. For each of the following, I'd like you to tell me how much of a sacrifice it would mean for you personally. Would it be a very big sacrifice, a fairly big sacrifice, a fairly small sacrifice or a very small sacrifice to make in order to help protect and improve our environment? How about... (READ AND ROTATE Q58 TO Q65)

		A Very Big Sacrifice	A Fairly Big Sacrifice	A Fairly Small Sacrifice	A Very Small Sacrifice	N/A
58.	paying $25 to replace the shower heads in your home with water-conserving models	3	4	30	50	12
59.	having to use only non-chemical pesticides and fertilizers on lawns, gardens and parks	3	4	22	56	15
60.	having to pay an extra $2 per bag to have your garbage collected	10	17	30	33	10
61.	having to pay an extra $100 a year to water your lawn	15	21	23	18	21
62.	having to pay an extra $1.00 per litre for gasoline	49	26	11	7	6
63.	having to pay 25¢ on each grocery bag you take from the store	10	15	35	36	3

		A Very Big Sacrifice	A Fairly Big Sacrifice	A Fairly Small Sacrifice	A Very Small Sacrifice	N/A
64.	having to pay an extra $1000 for cars that get less than 28 miles a gallon	25	20	24	19	11
65.	having to give up using household cleaners containing chemicals and use only cleaners containing natural substances, even if they require more time and elbow grease	4	7	33	52	4

END OF ROTATION

Now for each of the same list, please tell me if you would strongly support, support, oppose or strongly oppose the federal government taking action that would result in you... (READ AND ROTATE Q66 TO Q73)

		Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Support	Strongly Support
66.	paying $25 to replace the shower heads in your home with water-conserving models	6	18	58	17
67.	having to use only non-chemical pesticides and fertilizers on lawns, gardens and parks	3	9	60	28
68.	having to pay an extra $2 per bag to have your garbage collected	11	31	47	10
69.	having to pay an extra $100 a year to water your lawn	17	39	36	6
70.	having to pay an extra $1.00 per litre for gasoline	40	36	20	3
71.	having to pay 25¢ on each grocery bag you take from the store	11	24	52	13
72.	having to pay an extra $1000 for cars that get less than 28 miles a gallon	20	29	39	10
73.	having to give up using household cleaners containing chemicals and use only cleaners containing natural substances, even if they require more time and elbow grease	3	11	59	26

END OF ROTATION

There are a number of things which the federal government could do in the environmental field. For each of the following, please tell me whether it is something the federal government should do right away, is it something the federal government should consider in the future or is it something that the federal government should not consider doing? How about... (ROTATE Q74 -Q81)

		Should Do Right Away	Should Consider	Should Not Consider
74.	inform people of what they can do to protect the environment..	90	10	1
75.	investigate and publicize situations where businesses or people are polluting even if this invades their privacy..	68	25	6
76.	send polluters to jail for repeated offences..	52	32	16
77.	impose a tax on environmentally harmful products even if this raises the price of a product.	61	31	7
78.	spend more tax dollars to develop new environmental technologies..	60	31	9
79.	help bring business, labour and interest groups together to work on environmental solutions, even if this delays action being taken..	66	28	5
80.	give people tax breaks for helping solve environmental problems, even if this means that other Canadians might have to pay higher taxes to make up the difference.	36	38	25
81.	give businesses tax breaks for coming up with environmental solutions, even if this means that individual Canadians might have to pay higher taxes to make up the difference.	30	36	34

END OF ROTATION

82. I'd like to read you a list of different opinions and for each pair of opinions, please tell me which one is closer to your own. How about...(READ FIRST PAIR) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Environmental concern is probably just a fad which people will lose interest in after a while 10

or

Environmental concern will be a strong and lasting attitude from now on 90

---

83. Many businesses are trying to fool consumers into thinking their product are better for the environment than they really are 44

or

Some businesses may be trying to do this but most are being honest 55

---

84. Consumers and businesses should take the lead in solving environmental problems 38

or

Governments have to lead consumers and businesses towards solving environmental problems 60

---

85. Most environmental interest groups are too radical to be helpful in solving practical problems 28

or

Most environmental interest groups are prepared to offer practical solutions, not just radical ideas 70

---

86. If we get serious enough, we can reverse the environmental damage which we have caused up to now 31

or

We can't really hope to reverse the damage we have caused up to now, we can only hope to stop things from getting any worse 68

---

87. The attempt to clean up the environment is going to help the economy in the long run 85

or

The attempt to clean up the environment is going to hurt the econom in the long run 13

---

88. Given its good reputation and technical expertise on environmental matters, Canada should become an international leader in the attempt to improve and protect the world's environment 72

or

Other countries are better qualified than Canada to become international leaders in environmental matters 24

---

89. If the federal government stopped wasting so much money, there would be more than enough money to pay for good environmental programs 69

or

Even if the federal government stopped wasting money, they would have to either raise taxes or borrow more money to pay for the environmental programs we need 28

---

90. I am starting to <u>feel more hopeful</u> about environmental issues (GO TO Q91) 70

or

I am <u>not feeling any more hopeful</u> about environmental issues (SKIP TO Q92) 29

IF ANSWERED "FEEL MORE HOPEFUL" TO Q90, ASK:

91. Which <u>one</u> of the following things is helping you feel more hopeful? (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

I am convinced governments are trying harder to find solutions 13
I am convinced businesses are trying harder to find solutions 13
I am convinced that ordinary people are trying harder to find solutions 72

---

92. When governments try to get businesses to improve their protection of the environment, they can choose between several different approaches. Which one of the following do you think is best? (READ AND ROTATE LIST) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Enacting laws to force businesses to behave in certain ways 26
Increasing taxes on polluters but giving tax breaks to companies which act to protect the environment. 29
Publicizing and embarrassing polluters. 15
Informing and educating businesses so that they can take voluntary action 29

---

93. When governments try to influence individuals, they can try the same sorts of approaches. Which one of the following do you think is best? (READ AND ROTATE LIST) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Enacting laws to force people to behave in certain ways 17
Increasing taxes on people who pollute the environment but giving tax breaks to people who act to protect the environmental 25
Publicizing and embarrassing polluters. 11
Informing and educating people to take voluntary action 45

---

94. If you could choose only one of the following two options to improve Canada's system of national parks, would you choose to... (READ LIST) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Develop our national parks in a way that encourages their increased use by Canadians for recreation, such as for skiing and golfing 15

or

Develop parks in a way that primarily serves to protect nature. 83

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95. If new national parks are to be opened, which of the following arguments do you find most convincing about where the new parks should be located. (READ AND ROTATE LIST) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

New national parks should be located in regions where there are not currently any national parks. 15
New national parks should be located in areas of exceptional natural beauty 25
New national parks should be located in ecological areas that require protection 58

---

96. There has been a lot of debate recently about how much energy use, such as the burning of fossil fuels, contributes to the deterioration of our environment. Which of the following arguments do you find most convincing? (READ AND ROTATE) (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

We have to drastically change our ways of producing and using energy if we are to protect the environment 46
With a few changes, we can make energy production and energy use safe for the environment 44
The way we produce and use energy is not causing serious environment problems. 9

---

97. Some people say that society will always work in a way that harms the environment.

Other people say that society can someday work in a way that ensures a healthy environment.

Which one of these points of view is closer to your own? (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE)

Society will always inevitably work in a way that harms the environment 19
Society can someday work in a way that ensures a healthy environment. 80

"By now you may have realized that this survey is being conducted on behalf of Environment Canada. So that we can use your responses we would like to ask you some questions that would be used for statistical purposes only. We want to assure you that your answers will be kept confidential in two ways: first, your name will not be given to Environment Canada, and second, your answers will be combined with those of other participants in the survey for statistical purposes only".

98. What is your age, please? (IF RESPONDENT REFUSES, OFFER TO READ CATEGORIES AND HAVE HIM/HER TELL YOU WHICH CATEGORY HE/SHE FALLS INTO)

18-19 years	4
20-24 years	10
25-29 years	14
30-34 years	15
35-39 years	12
40-44 years	11
45-49 years	9
50-54 years	7
55-59 years	6
60-64 years	4
65 years or older	10

Would your annual household income from all sources before taxes be...under $40,000 or $40,000 or more per year?

Under $40,000 - (GO TO Q 99.A) . . . . . A
$40,000 or more - (SKIP TO Q99.B) . . . . . B*

99A Is that...(READ LIST)

Less than $5,000 2
$ 5,000 - $ 9,999 5
$10,000 - $14,999 7
$15,000 - $19,999 7
$20,000 - $24,999 9
$25,000 - $29,999 9
$30,000 - $34,999 8
$35,000 - $39,999 9

**SKIP TO - Q100

99.B Is that...(READ LIST)

$40,000 - $44,999 12
$45,000 - $49,999 5
$50,000 - $54,999 5
$55,000 - $59,999 5
$60,000 - $64,999 3
$65,000 - $69,999 3
$70,000 - $74,999 1
$75,000 and over. 9

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100. Do you or does a member of your household own a car?

Yes. 90
No 10

101.A Are you currently attending school, college or university as a full-time student?

Yes (SKIP TO Q102)	6*
No (GO TO Q101.B)	A

IF "NO" to Q101.A, ASK:

101.B What is the highest level of schooling education that you have completed?

Public/elementary school (grade 1-8)	5
Some high school	18
Graduated high school (grade 12 or 13)	29
Vocational/technical/college/1	16
Some university	6
Graduated university	17
At school	8

102. Are you currently employed for pay?

Yes (GO TO Q103)	66
No (SKIP TO Q104)	34

103. What is your occupation, that is, what are your main job responsibilities? (PROBE: What type of company do you work for? ANSWER MUST BE AT LEAST TEN WORDS.)

Mid- Level Production Worker	18
Low level service	13
Mid-Level Service	10
Mid-level office worker	9
Management/Executive	9
Low level office worker	8
Professional	7
Teacher	6

104. In addition to being a Canadian, what is your main ancestry or ethnic group, that is, what country did you or your ancestors come from? (ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE -- IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS "CANADIAN," "AMERICAN," OR "EUROPEAN," PROBE FOR COUNTRY OF ORIGIN. IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS "INDIAN," ASK: Are you a North American or East Indian? -- IF MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE IS GIVEN, ACCEPT PATERNAL ANCESTRY.)

British	37
North European	18
French	17
Irish	10
Eastern European	9

105. Sex. (BY OBSERVATION)

Male	50
Female	50

106. Language of interview

English	84

107. Do you own your own home?

Own	70
Rent	30

MAY I HAVE THE SPELLING OF YOUR LAST NAME, PLEASE?

RESPONDENT'S NAME: Miss/Mrs./Ms./Mr. _____

IF REFUSAL, ASK: May I then please have just your first name, in case my supervisor needs to verify that this interview actually took place?

TELEPHONE NUMBER: ( ) _____
AREA CODE NUMBER

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

I have reread this completed questionnaire and certify that all questions requiring answers have been appropriately filled in and this interview has been obtained from the individual designated according to proper sampling procedures.

INTERVIEWER'S SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

NOTE: This interview is the sole property of Summerhill Research Centre. Any attempt to duplicate or sell the contents constitutes an illegal act and is subject to prosecution.

DECIMA

C. DEPENDENT VARIABLES AND THEIR CLUSTERING

The analysis was organized in accordance with the idea that preferences regarding future government action and certain other kinds of action should be viewed as dependent variables. In other words, it was desirable to focus analysis on determining and explaining the kind of future environmental action people support. There were three sets of variables that seemed suited to providing a general picture of public preference for environmental action. These were the degree of support for certain types of sacrifices (q.68 to q.73), the urgency of certain types of actions (q.74 to q.81) and program approaches to environmental policy (q. 92 to q. 93).

It was found that responses to the sacrifice/support questions could be largely summarized by two factors (principal components). These could be termed support for new "taxes and charges" and "support for restrictions of in-home products and activities". The last factor may have some ambiguity in that it involves questions that may have been viewed by some as relating to personal choice while others may have viewed them as relating to government restriction of available products.

The urgency of questions can also be reasonably well summarized by two factors (principal components). One could be termed "urgency of a general spectrum of coercive and educational policies." The other factor relates very specifically to "urgency of tax break rewards for the environmentally responsible." The first factor probably just represents the conventional Canadian commitment to all sorts of proactive government while the second reflects something more specific and, in Canadian terms, less conventional.

Questions 92 and 93, which focused on general approaches to government programming, were not suitable for factor analysis. They were transformed into a series of 8 dichotomous variables, one variable for each response category, and these new variables were themselves a focus of analysis. It might be possible to run a factor analysis on the dichotomies, but this would not be the strongest use of the factor analysis approach.

In order to see if these indicators of desired action were associated with particular groups of people, various analyses were run. The most fruitful was the use of cluster analysis. People were clustered using the scores on the 4 factors and 8 dichotomies described above. People who scored similarly on these variables would be clustered together in this procedure. There are discretionary aspects to this analysis, but clear clusters formed in the 3 to 5 cluster range. The 4 cluster situation seemed to be the best, and the results of this are described on page 34.